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ON  
THE  
THEORY  
OF  
SOCIAL  
CHANGE

HOW ECONOMIC GROWTH BEGINS

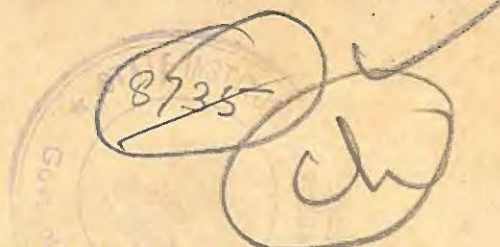
BY

EVERETT E. HAGEN

AN ADAPTATION



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ON THE THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

HOW ECONOMIC GROWTH BEGINS



THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

THE  
LORD  
OF THE  
TREASURY

ON THE THEORY

OF

SOCIAL CHANGE

HOW ECONOMIC GROWTH BEGINS

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Everett E. Hagen

An Adaptation

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In addition to *ON THE THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE*, he is the author of *THE ECONOMICS OF DEVELOPMENT* (Homewood, Illinois, Irwin, 1968). He has also published technical articles in economics journals, as well as articles about social change in American sociological, anthropological and political science journals.



This book is a special adaptation of *ON THE THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE: How Economic Growth Begins*, by Everett E. Hagen (The Dorsey Press, Inc., Homewood, Illinois, U.S.A.: 1962, pp. 557). Prepared by Richard W. Hatch, with the approval of the author and for the convenience of the non-specialist, this edition is a shorter and less-technical version than the original.



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## PREFACE

THIS book attempts to contribute to knowledge of the process of economic growth and in doing so, to add to the total knowledge of social theory. It is based on the strong belief that the studies of culture and of communities in low-income societies by anthropologists, of the social structure of societies by sociologists, and of personality formation by psychologists, have reached a point where they should be integrated, or brought together, in a theory of economic development and other social change.

In the process of integration important advances in method and meaning can be made. In addition, it is possible to state something about the nature of the relationships between aspects of social structure and aspects of personality that need to be introduced into models of society.

A popular idea of the relationship between personality and democracy is that all people everywhere "naturally" prefer self-government. It is also a popular idea that authoritarian governments—those which demand unquestioning obedience—have existed throughout long historical periods because small groups have held the remaining members of the society in subjection by force. This view is almost certainly wrong. It is much more probable that authoritarian and hierarchical social structure based on class has persisted because the mass of the people did not prefer self-government. One of the propositions advanced in this book is that they found an authoritarian hierarchical social structure acceptable because of the nature of their childhood.

The history of every society is powerfully influenced by the pattern of relationships among individuals which the members of the society have found satisfactory as children. For example, in some societies children may settle their differences by rather aggressive conflict. In others they may learn to trust their ability to settle their differences more peacefully, without ideas being formed in advance about whose wishes should prevail. In still other societies they may learn rules of senior and junior, authority and yielding, settlement of differences by relative authority rather than by bargaining. If a hierarchical authoritarian social structure persists for centuries (as it has in traditional societies), it is probable

that the members of the society found it satisfactory, and did so because in childhood they found such a structure of relationships the best solution to their problems with other people. When a society which has found satisfaction in authoritarian government changes to democratic government, it is probable that childhood environment has changed so that the need of a hierarchy above and below the individual is no longer felt in childhood. Instead, exploration without authoritarian guidance of the individual's relations with his equals seems safe and satisfying. Therefore, it seems safe and satisfying in adulthood as well.

Of course, personality changes throughout life and the relationship between childhood and adulthood is far more complex than this brief reference suggests. Nevertheless, the effect on adult behavior of patterns learned in childhood is always great. A model of society which does not recognize this fact is of limited usefulness.

I suggest that the social sciences must recognize also the opposite relationship between society and childhood. If changes in childhood environment lead to basic change in a society, it is also true that something must have caused the changes in childhood environment. And the most likely cause of change in childhood environment in a society which has until then been reasonably satisfying to its members is the appearance of some new source of anxiety in the society.

If a new social situation causes the members of some group, who were previously reasonably content, to be anxious about their lives, the anxiety will affect their behavior in the home and thus the environment in which their children grow up. I suggest that such tensions, existing over a period of generations, are a fundamental cause of social change. Thus, a model of society which includes such tensions and their effect on childhood environment may be fruitful in the interpretation of history.

The tensions may be due either to the intruding of outside groups on the society or to the inner workings of the society itself. The tensions are not an ultimate cause, because ultimate historical analysis must go behind them to ask why the events which led to new tensions occurred. But if we can take such historic situations as starting points and construct models which explain the ensuing sequences of social change, we shall be doing well enough.



ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE BROAD SCOPE  
OF HISTORY

PRESUMABLY there has always been slow improvement in the human condition. However, it was not until the 18th or early 19th century—in England—that there began a series of advances in technology, or industrial arts, and a rise in output per person which was rapid enough so that observable marked change occurred within each generation, and indeed during each decade, or 10-year period. Change at such a pace may be termed *economic growth*.

The spread of economic growth from its beginnings in England has been continuous. Today, in countries containing a total of approximately one-third of the world's population and producing more than 80 per cent of its income, the process of technological progress now seems so firmly built into behavior patterns that, in the absence of military catastrophe, continuing rapid rise in productivity may confidently be anticipated throughout the foreseeable future. In countries having another 60 per cent of the world's population fairly rapid technological progress is occurring, although it has still had a rather short life. Only one-tenth or less of the people of the world live in countries where the available facts do not give clear evidence of an appreciable rate of technological progress.

Geographically, the distribution of countries among the three groups is not without a pattern. Economic growth is universal among the countries of Europe and North America, less common in Latin America, and least perceivable in many countries of Asia and Africa. But there is some evidence of growth in some countries of every continent.

The technological progress that is the cause of rising income consists of two steps: The discovery of new knowledge that makes possible an increase in the output of goods and services per unit of labor, capital and materials used in production; and the using of that knowledge in productive processes. This progress includes the devising of more satisfying products as well as of

more efficient methods of production. It includes the entire process of innovation, or developing new methods, from an advance in pure science to its adaptation in engineering and its application in production. Within the realm of methods, progress includes not only scientific and technical advances but also the devising of new forms of organization or methods of procedure that make the society more efficient in production. All these somewhat varied activities have in common the devising of new concepts, which is the essence of technological progress.

Income in a society may rise because of the spread of the use of tools and machines even in the absence of technological progress. But if this process consists solely of the construction of instruments already known and does not include new ideas, the rise in income will gradually come to a halt. Continuing rise in income—that is, continuing economic growth—is obtained only by continuing improvement in techniques or products. There is no other road.

I shall describe the process of change in any society—from technological advance so slow that it is hardly noticeable from generation to generation, to continuing advance so rapid that it is conspicuous from decade to decade—as the *transition to economic growth*. What are the causes of the transition?

### **Some Acceptable Explanations**

In the broad scope of history the answer is clear: Entry upon economic growth is a result of the accelerating, or rapidly increasing, sum of scientific and technical knowledge.

In traditional societies occasional scientific or technological advance occurred in two ways. First, by more or less chance discoveries by intelligent minds, the effects of which were not important. Second, however, unusual and non-conforming individuals appear in any society. The specific circumstances of their individual lives that caused such individuals to be different undoubtedly made some of them turn their energies to problems of technology. From time to time, therefore, new truths about the physical world were discovered and new techniques of production devised; and those were adopted that did not threaten the position of powerful groups and were not contrary to values held in the society.

These advances in technology, by adding to the base of knowledge, increased by a rapidly growing amount the number of further possible additions. Further, when the change was noticeable to human observation the additional knowledge itself probably stimulated the devotion of increased energy to the study of science and technology precisely because such study had become more rewarding. The social changes resulting from the technological advance might create pressures against this advance and even cause a return to lack of progress. If this did not happen, however, it had been proved centuries ago (although men did not necessarily realize it) that the trickle of technological progress would become ultimately a rushing tide, disrupting the traditional social structure, and bringing the changes in the social system necessary to support it.

History confirms this statement. Following the scientific advances of ancient times, a return to lack of progress occurred through dislike of the new ideas and the destruction caused by wars. However, advance began again in Europe between the 6th and the 15th centuries. A thousand years or more before the Industrial Revolution—which began in England about 1760—and several centuries before the reopening of trade in the 11th century among the countries on the Mediterranean Sea and the growth of cities, technology was moving forward. As early as the 4th century, water wheels were known in Europe; their use spread rapidly during the next several centuries. The making of soap was also discovered in the latter part of the 4th century. Apparently between the 7th and 10th centuries the cultivation of rye and oats was introduced. How to make butter was also discovered and a three-field system was introduced that kept two-thirds instead of one-half of the land under cultivation where summer rains made spring plowing advantageous. In the 10th century a new method of making wire was devised. The introduction, apparently in the 11th century, of the moldboard—a curved piece of iron attached to a plow—greatly improved the efficiency of plowing in some soils.

In the 12th to 15th centuries a number of other important technical advances occurred. Brick-making was revived (beginning before the year 1200). The windmill was greatly improved. Methods of heating iron to a melted condition and making it



sufficiently free of impure elements so that it could be molded into tools were devised. Improvements in steel-making and molding permitted the making of the true needle, with fully enclosed eye. The spinning wheel doubled the amount of yarn one person could spin and a new type of weaving frame somewhat lessened work in weaving. The use of two shafts in place of a single pole in harnessing horses and the use of straps permitted harnessing animals behind one another. The invention of the horse collar to replace the breast band, which had choked horses when they pulled hard, increased by three or four times the load one horse could pull.

These inventions occurred before as well as after the reopening of trade in the Mediterranean Sea, and many of those that occurred later were not connected with it. Thus the reopening of trade merely stimulated and did not start change. The inventiveness which these earlier inventions imply probably made easier the growth of cities in the 12th century than the reopening of trade in the 11th century had caused to be started. Following these developments, after a period which seems to have been one of relative lack of progress, and after the great shock of the dreaded disease, the Black Death, in the 14th century, came a continuing acceleration, or increasing amount, of invention. At the same time technological progress spread until in England it blossomed into the Industrial Revolution in the last half of the 18th century.

Once the tree of progress had blossomed, its leaves were carried into far away lands by the winds of trade and on the boots of conquering armies. And with it were carried the seeds of radical social change. No one can doubt that the main sources of change in societies in Latin America, Asia and Africa during modern times are their introduction to the Western world and the display of its economic power and skill.

If there are no serious internal stresses and no disturbing forces from the outside, cultural change in any society proceeds at a slow pace. Virtually every social scientist would think it likely that except for contact with the West and its example, the social structure and techniques that characterized traditional societies in, say the 16th century, would be little changed today.

### Unanswered Questions

But these historical facts do not explain enough. They do not explain the pace of the advance of knowledge over the centuries. We are likely to accept without question the slow pace toward modern times. Advance was slow, we suggest, because the base of knowledge was small. The explanation is not convincing. How slow is slow? Why had rapid technological progress appeared in such widely separated spots? Since at least the end of the 18th century technical knowledge adequate for economic growth has been available to any society in the world. Why have various societies differed so much in the degree to which they have taken advantage of it? Why, among the societies in the world that remained traditional longer than the West, have some made the transition to economic growth sooner than others? We would like to be able to predict which of the societies that are still technically unprogressive will enter upon economic growth soon, and which less soon. We would like to understand the variable forces at work, partly simply because we crave to understand the process of social change and partly because we would hasten the process if we could.

Some observers find the explanation of the varied timing of entry upon economic growth largely in economic factors. The introduction of advanced methods, they note, requires the investment of a considerable amount of resources. They suggest that the traditional societies have too low a level of income to permit individuals to save enough to finance such investments, or that the market is too small to make it advantageous for anyone to construct large factories using improved methods.

The first of these arguments would imply that no low-income country can develop without economic aid from the outside. Since we know that Japan began her development with virtually no external aid and Colombia with very little, the argument is not convincing. Even without these cases to alert us, we would have no reason to assume without exploration that the individuals of low-income societies could not divert to economic growth sufficient resources to accomplish it if they wished to do so. In even the lowest-income peasant societies the level of income is not so low that all of it is used for the necessities of life; this is true of only the lower-income classes. Other groups in

these societies could typically save amounts equal to 10 per cent or more of the national income without hardship or bodily discomfort. This fraction is ample to finance economic growth. The appropriate decisions are matters of social choice, not necessity.

Similarly, we have no reason to assume without investigation that the markets in low-income countries are too small to justify the introduction of advanced methods. When the necessary investigation is made, it suggests that they are not too small.

Brief examination of some aspects of the history of countries which have entered upon continuing technological progress will suggest the general nature of a theory which may offer an explanation of the different rates of growth in different countries.

### **Agricultural Society—the Starting Point**

So far in the world's history, economic growth has begun only in agricultural societies (or in new societies created by people who migrate from agricultural or industrial societies). It seems unlikely that it can begin in societies that have not reached the state of settled agriculture; peoples who lead wandering lives cannot accumulate many tools and they will not make the transition to continuing technological progress until they do.

### **The Transition as a Gradual Process**

Although the coming of economic growth has been sudden if one's viewpoint is the entire scope of human history, it has been very gradual if measured in decades or even generations.

We are likely to think that growth in Russia began rather suddenly under the communists, or, if we have somewhat greater knowledge of the facts, early in the 20th century. But a careful and competent investigator has estimated that Russia's national wealth increased by 2 per cent per year from 1860 to the early 1880's and by 3 per cent per year from then until World War I; and that output per capita, or person, increased by  $3/4$  per cent and  $1-1/4$  per cent per year respectively during these two periods.<sup>1</sup> Detailed research also indicates that growth did not begin in China suddenly with the coming to power of the

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond W. Goldsmith, "The Economic Growth of Tsarist Russia, 1860-1913," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, April 1961, pp. 441-475.

communist regime. Rather, the recent growth builds upon the steadily accelerating previous growth, interrupted by Japanese invasion, World War II, and postwar civil strife, which began at least as early as the 1870's.

The generally accepted date for the beginning of economic growth in Japan is some year in the 1870's, after the reformers of the Meiji Restoration had firmly established their control of the economy. However, a study of the history of the Tokugawa era, from 1600 to 1868, indicates clearly that technological agitation was great before the end of that period, and it suggests strongly that per capita income began to rise by at least the year 1700.

The history of development in Latin America, and the misunderstandings about it, are similar. Colombian economists and businessmen state that rapid growth in Colombia began in the depression of the 1930's. However, a study by the United Nations' Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) extending back to the early 1920's shows that the growth both in national production and in industrial output was more rapid in the 1920's than in the 1930's.<sup>2</sup> Study of the economic history of Colombia suggests strongly that output per capita has been increasing at least since the spread of coffee cultivation began in about 1860. Industrialization began before 1900 and accelerated between 1900 and 1920. The more conspicuous industrial growth since 1920 is merely a continuation.

In Argentina, where economic growth is also often assumed to be recent, available facts make estimates for a longer period possible. An ECLA study indicates that both national product and industrial output have been accelerating steadily since 1900, and no more rapidly after the 1930's than before.<sup>3</sup> The suggestion is strong that if facts were available for still earlier periods, the beginnings of growth would be found well back in the 19th century.

The transition to economic growth, one may reasonably

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *Análisis y Proyecciones del Desarrollo Económico, III; El Desarrollo Económico de Colombia* (Mexico, 1957).

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin America, *El Desarrollo Económico de la Argentina, Anexo, Algunos Estudios Especiales y Estadísticos Macroeconómicos Preparados para el Informe* (mimeographed; Santiago, Chile: June 30, 1958).



decide from these several examples, typically occupies a period of several generations.

A contrary judgment is sometimes drawn from the experience of England. According to the best available evidence, industrial production in England and Wales, after a brief period of strong activity between 1710 and 1720, crept upward (with some irregularity) until the mid-1760's, then remained almost constant until 1780. Then it began that rather spectacular rapid rise for four decades which is often believed to mark the beginning of the modern economic period.

This sudden acceleration of the rate of advance is associated, however, with the appearance of a remarkable group of inventions within a 20-year period. Between 1764 and 1784 there appeared in the textile industry a new machine for spinning, a power loom for weaving, and a new method of printing designs on cloth. There were several successive improvements in the steam engine; and in the iron industry an improved method of removing impure elements from iron was discovered. The putting into actual use of this amazing group of inventions caused the continuing rapid rise in manufacturing output.

Thus the abruptness with which the rise began was not due to some force which may be expected to be repeated elsewhere. Neither, indeed, does it seem to have been matched by a correspondingly sudden change in the rate of rise of national production as a whole. One of the leading students of the economic growth of England estimates that national income in England and Wales grew by 0.3 per cent per year during the period from 1700 to 1740, 0.9 per cent per year during 1740-70, 1.5 per cent during 1770-1800, and exceeded 2 per cent per year after 1800. The acceleration of growth increased steadily over a long period.<sup>4</sup>

It should not be assumed that everywhere else the transition proceeded smoothly and steadily. Although we do not have

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<sup>4</sup> The estimates, by Phyllis Deane, are cited by Simon Kuznets in "Qualitative Aspects of the Economic Growth of Nations, VI: Long-Term Trends in Capital Formation Proportions," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. IX, No. 4, Part II (July, 1961). The precise estimates by 30-year periods are unreliable, but that growth was accelerating during the first three-fourths of the 18th century, and continued to accelerate in the 19th century, is clear.

sufficient historical information to be certain, the rate of economic growth in Russia may have accelerated fairly rapidly soon after the freeing of the serfs, or slaves, in the 19th century. In Japan the energies which were partly restrained by the social structure during the last generations of Tokugawa rule surged forth after the Meiji Restoration; and if we had more facts we should probably find that the rate of economic growth accelerated fairly abruptly during the two decades following 1868. Other instances of the breaking down of barriers and probable lack of continuity in the pace of economic change might be cited. But if we emphasize the moments of change, we shall be deceived by their apparent suddenness and apparent importance. Underlying them and preceding them were forces and sequences of change, operating over longer periods, that become evident to the casual historical observer only when the pace of observable action changes. Their importance becomes apparent only when we ask ourselves what the mechanisms at work may be and construct an adequate theory of the functioning of the society.

### **Contact with the West**

While economic growth requires some minimum contact with Western knowledge, the timing and pace of economic growth in low-income societies are not closely related to the amount of contact with technically advanced societies. Furthermore, they are not in all cases closely related to the amount of investment in the low-income societies by the advanced ones, or the degree to which contact with the West has disrupted the traditional social system.

Because only two dozen countries or so have yet surely entered upon economic growth, not many comparisons are possible, but a few are appropriate. Colombia had very little immigration after the 18th century and until recent decades had far less contact than Brazil or Mexico, for example, with Europeans and European centers or the United States. And Colombia had very little foreign investment until after World War II. Yet it began a continuing advance in technology and per capita income within a decade or two of Brazil and Mexico. The entire Near East has failed to show any evidences of growth until the middle of the 20th century, and its failure to do so in spite of its involvement

in European history during the past several centuries is strong evidence of the inability of contact in itself to cause growth. The most forceful evidence, however, is that provided by the comparative history of the four major Asian nations—Indonesia, India, China and Japan.

The Portuguese established contact with all four of these countries during the first half of the 16th century, but the succeeding contact of the four countries with the West varied widely. The Portuguese were followed in Indonesia by the Dutch and English at the end of the 16th century. By early in the 17th century the Dutch had established themselves securely. They continued to rule the area, to invest in it, and to live in it in appreciable numbers from then until the mid-20th century. In India, the East India Company obtained its first trading concession, or grant, in 1608. Thereafter, during the 17th and 18th centuries, the British slowly expanded their footholds on the subcontinent, but even by 1785 they controlled only Bengal and strips of land along the east coast. Their conquest of the mass of the subcontinent occurred during the 19th century. In China, apart from the work of the missionaries, penetration never consisted of more than the establishment of a number of trading and manufacturing organizations in coastal cities from which trade with the interior was forced on the country. Japan was too far away and too poor for the Western powers to press their attentions as persistently as on the other three countries, and from about the 1630's on, the Tokugawa were successful in enforcing a policy of no contact with the West except through a small Dutch trading group at Nagasaki, whom they permitted to remain as "a window on the West."

Thus, of the four countries, entrance by and contact with the West were earliest and probably most intensive in Indonesia, next so in India (although the difference between the two may not have been great), much less in China, and by far least of all in Japan. The degree of disruption of the native culture was probably in the same order, and certainly was much the least of all in Japan. The level of income in Japan in the 17th century was hardly higher than in the other three countries. Perhaps it was lower. Of the four countries, natural resources per capita were much the poorest in Japan, and it is probably justifiable to add

that they were greater in both India and Indonesia than in China. However, Japan entered upon rapid technological advance in the second half of the 19th century, China is now doing so vigorously, India has begun though at a slower pace, and return to earlier levels rather than advance seems to be occurring in Indonesia. Clearly the effects of contact with Western knowledge, disruption of traditional culture, and availability of resources either were not related to the progress or were cancelled by other influences.

### **Economic, Social and Political Change**

Our brief historical discussion implies that a model that explains economic growth must consider non-economic as well as economic aspects of human behavior. This is seen also from the fact that the economic state of a society is closely related to its political state, and that the forces that bring change in the one also bring some sort of change in the other.

A society whose technology is unchanging is also unchanging in other elements of its culture. Lack of consistent progress in techniques is a characteristic of all traditional societies and only of traditional societies. Conversely, in the countries in which the transition to economic growth has occurred it has been at the same time as far-reaching change in political organization, social structure and attitudes toward life. The relationship is so impressive and so universal that to assume that one of these aspects of basic social change is unrelated to the others is to strain the doctrine of coincidence beyond all justification.

Glance at the historical record. In Britain the Industrial Revolution that gathered force gradually in the 18th century followed some centuries of social and religious tensions. Through their representatives in Parliament successive generations of townspeople progressively destroyed the hierarchy of political power. At the same time non-conformist religious beliefs appeared. The Calvinist church was the "established" church in Scotland and was supported by the government. The Church of England held the same position in England. Some lowland Scots refused to accept the Calvinist doctrine, and several dissenting sects in England denied that the Church of England doctrine was true Christianity. And the Dissenters and lowland Scots were present



among the people who were creating economic changes in numbers out of all proportion to their numbers in the population as a whole.

In the countries of western Europe the industrial revolution began during or shortly after the series of violent changes in government and the social order which stretched from the French Revolution in the 18th century to the revolutions of the mid-19th century. It is associated in time with the abolishing of most elements of serfdom, or slavery, with marked change in the accepted concepts of appropriate relationships among social classes, and with the growth of representative government.

In Japan the impressive economic growth of the latter 19th century followed a long period during which the Tokugawa rulers, in attempting to maintain the social order as it then existed and make their rule perpetual, created economic and social tensions that severely weakened the traditional structure of Japanese society.

In Russia in 1667 the Patriarch of Moscow—a high-ranking church official—revised the Orthodox Church rituals to bring them into agreement with Greek practice. To many lower-class members of the Church the change seemed a threat to their bond with God. These Old Believers were persecuted with varying vigor and harshness from the latter part of the 17th century until the early years of the 20th century. It surely is not coincidence that the Old Believers were prominent in the new economic practices which began to change the face of Russia in the 19th century.

Lastly, if one classifies the less-developed countries of the world in three groups according to whether their political structure is authoritarian, partly competitive, or wholly competitive, and then ranks the groups according to their economic level as measured by fair indexes, one sees impressive confirmation of historical association. A "competitive" political structure is one in which the interests of various groups are considered before political decisions are made. One sees, broadly speaking, that the authoritarian countries rank low economically, the partly competitive ones higher, and the competitive ones highest. The exceptions to this close relationship are so special in nature that

the generality of the association between economic performance and political structure is very clear.<sup>5</sup>

### The Concentration of Leadership

The foregoing sketches suggest that economic growth has been led not by individuals distributed by chance throughout a society but disproportionately by individuals from some distinctive social group. The importance of such groups may be seen by considering three examples.

In the last half of the 18th century Non-conformists formed only about 7 per cent of the population of England and Wales. Probably the Scottish dissenters who did not accept the doctrine of the established Presbyterian church hardly formed a higher percentage of the population of Scotland. It is, I suggest, a fact of significance for social theory that these groups provided one half of the businessmen who were adopting new methods in Britain in the 18th and early 19th centuries. In proportion to their number in the population as a whole these dissenting groups provided more than ten times as many innovators, or men who adopted new methods, as did the rest of the society.

In Japan, leadership in economic change was concentrated among lower-class *samurai*, or military men, and so-called "wealthy peasants." Although population estimates classified by social groups are not available, clearly these groups provided disproportionate numbers of leaders.

Consider finally the case of Colombia. The Spanish *conquistadores*, or conquerors, came to Colombia during the 1530's and occupied the high plateau around the present Bogotá (the Sabana), the valley of the upper Cauca river (known simply as

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<sup>5</sup> Seymour Lipset indicated this close relationship between economic growth and political structure in a professional article. Later James S. Coleman assembled more data and elaborated the analysis. Still later, omitting colonies from the analysis, I presented a slightly different analysis. See S. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. LIII, No. 1 (March, 1959); G. A. Almond, J. S. Coleman, et al., *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1960); and E. E. Hagen, "A General Framework for Analyzing Economic and Political Change," in R. E. Asher, E. E. Hagen, A. O. Hirschman, et al., *Development of the Emerging Countries* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1962).

"the Valley"), and the valley of Antioquia. They were in search of gold and adventure. They found little gold or silver on the Sabana or in the Valley, but they did find healthful fertile lands and established themselves as land-owners on large estates or ranches. The Indians performed the manual, or hand labor. In Antioquia they found some gold and silver, and thereafter the continued quest for this form of wealth received much greater relative economic emphasis in Antioquia than on the Sabana or in the Valley. Because of the difficulty of finding enough labor, the land-owners increasingly became mine workers themselves.

The *conquistadores* in all three areas were mostly from the lower social and economic classes of Spain, not the higher. When the occupants of the other two areas became land-owners or cattle ranchers, with the zeal of a new insecure elite, or upper class, they felt and expressed contempt for their dirty neighbors in Antioquia who labored with their own hands. This feeling was evident in the literature and historical writings of the 18th and 19th centuries. The Antioqueños, conscious of their equal claim to Spanish blood and culture, felt resentment at the attitudes of superiority.

During Colombia's colonial period the central colonial city was Bogotá, and after independence Bogotá was the national capital. The Bogotanos had far greater contact with the various countries of western Europe than did the Antioqueños. In addition, access from Cali, the main city of the Valley, both to Bogotá and to the Pacific was somewhat better than that from Antioquia and its main city, Medellín. Of the three areas, Antioquia was the most isolated. Yet as economic growth has proceeded in Colombia it has developed that, out of proportion to their numbers, the Antioqueños are the ones who are adopting new methods.

These brief historical references indicate that leaders in the transition to economic growth were neither distributed by chance throughout the population nor drawn from the highest class groups. Neither did they have the greatest wealth or greatest opportunity for access to foreign knowledge and capital. Instead, they came disproportionately from some one or more of the less elite groups whose members had traditionally had a secure place in the social order but had lost the status they felt they were

entitled to expect and were now held in low esteem by the leading social group.

This common sociological aspect of the transition in these three societies is hardly coincidence. I suggest that similar phenomena would probably be found in other societies whose transition to economic growth was examined carefully. Any analysis of the transition to economic growth must consider this phenomenon.

It is worthwhile to add that the phenomenon is not one of a group lacking complete acceptance in the society. The leaders in the transition were members of a group that had had a secure accepted status in the traditional society and then had found it slipping away. They had been an essential part of a society and then, psychologically at least, had been partially rejected by it. This is a phenomenon of far more subtlety and significance than merely being an outsider.

### **Creativity as a Requirement**

The last characteristic of economic growth which it seems useful to discuss in this introduction to the problem is that it always requires creative innovation or change.

Innovation is a fundamental of technological progress. Without it the progress would stop. But the advances which have already occurred in the West are here for all the world to observe. Less-developed economies can adopt them. Therefore, it is said, they can advance simply by imitating; they need not create.

This, however, happens not to be true. Previous technological advance abroad of course makes technological progress easier than otherwise for a present low-income society. This is true because the society has the alternatives of adapting methods from the West or devising methods itself, and without previous advance abroad it would have only the latter. Nevertheless, a tremendous degree of creative innovation is required for technological progress in any present traditional society, as it was in the societies where continuing technological progress first began.

It is required, surprisingly enough, for two purely technical reasons in addition to cultural and social ones.

First, the simple imitation of Western methods is typically impossible. The most obvious but not the most important prob-



lem is that the available labor force differs greatly. In the West the mass of men are able to read instructions and information. In addition, they have an understanding of the functioning of machinery, and thereby of its care and handling, as they grew up in a mechanized civilization. Among them are many with varying degrees of training in engineering, scientific, financial, accounting and managerial knowledge and techniques. It is impossible to man an enterprise in a less-developed economy with corresponding individuals.

Probably more important, a Western economy is a technical (and cultural) complex, not a set of isolated pieces of technology from which one piece can be detached and used efficiently elsewhere without skillful adaptation. Every Western industry depends for its efficiency on other industries. It assumes the ready availability of materials, machine parts and tools. It depends also on supplemental enterprises which can provide technical, financial and managerial services on demand; on a complex network of communication and transportation facilities; and on a complicated system of business practices. In a less-developed society the supplemental industries are missing and the structure of business practices is different.

Not only is simple imitation often impossible. Even where possible it is often inefficient. Western methods use much productive equipment or "capital" per laborer—machines, tools, buildings, roads, dams, power installations, communications systems. Because the incomes of less-developed societies are low, the amount of capital they can accumulate per year, even with generous economic aid from the West, is limited. Suppose that they tried to advance merely by importing the elaborate machines and equipment used in the West. They could afford only enough to benefit a small fraction of their workers. A calculation of the amount of capital used per worker in the West indicates that a less-developed country could provide an equal amount of capital per worker for fewer workers per year than the growth in its labor force. Thus the number of workers doomed to work with traditional methods and equipment would forever increase. Therefore, technical advance throughout the country by the introduction of Western methods is not possible.

If the reader asks in surprise whether the importation of me-

thods from the West by the less-developed economies, through their own efforts plus economic and technical aid, is not in fact the way they are proceeding, the answer is that this is the aspect of their efforts which is portrayed in the West. But in fact, the countries that are developing rapidly are adopting Western methods only for selected purposes (such as steel-making). Even here they are adapting them so as to use more labor and less mechanization in supplemental processes. However, throughout the economy as a whole, they are devising methods of using Western principles with simpler tools and equipment, and in many cases are devising new methods to solve problems at hand.

The difficulty also goes deeper than these technical problems. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to state that solving the technical problems is the easy aspect of technological progress for present-day low-income countries. There are human obstacles of two kinds. First, men may find the new types of activity required offensive. It is beneath the dignity of a professional man or a member of the land-owning class in a traditional society to be occupied with tools or machinery, because this sort of work is associated with the laboring classes. Members of those classes, in turn, may find slavery to a machine annoying. Further, if they accept a job that demands attendance season in and season out, they may have to stop performing emotionally important duties to their families, their community, or their religion.

It is perhaps more important to note that considering problem-solving in any field to be interesting, requires a certain mental attitude. There is reason to believe that one of the conditions which cause a society to remain traditional is that this attitude is absent except in a few individuals. Instead, facing problems causes anxiety. To avoid the tensions resulting from attempts at problem-solving, even leaders of the society avoid trying to make technical changes.

Consequently, changes in traditional behavior necessary for economic growth will be adopted only if considerable creativity is devoted to the task of making them acceptable, or if there exist social tensions and pressures so great that they change men's attitudes.

Or, indeed, both conditions may be necessary. It may be that no society has begun technological progress in the past or will

do so in the future without the exertion of great creativity in solution of the social problems as well as the technical ones. It may also be that sufficient creativity will not be forthcoming except as tensions within the society lead to changes in men. How social tensions do this is the chief theme of this book.

To make technological innovation by a minority of the population effective, there must be acceptance of change and adaptation to it by other larger groups. In this study I shall give primary attention to the innovational process. This I shall do, not in the belief that the true innovator can overcome all of the obstacles before him, but rather because the appearance of a substantial stream of technological innovation in a society in which it has previously been largely absent seems by far the more difficult and more interesting of the two problems. I shall, however, discuss briefly the problem of acceptance of change.

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## CHAPTER II

# HISTORICAL BASES FOR A THEORY OF GROWTH

THE historical instances I have cited suggest that the barriers to economic growth are largely internal rather than external, and that the causes of growth may also be internal. Thus we must understand the nature of traditional societies, and the differences among them, if we are to understand why some traditional societies enter upon economic growth sooner than others. This chapter considers the characteristics that mark a society as traditional, and the relationships that cause traditionalism to persist for centuries. Traditional peasant societies will be of especial interest here, because people of hunting and herding societies, not having settled habitations, can hardly accumulate many objects and enter upon continuing technological progress.

A society is traditional if behavior is governed by custom and if ways of behavior continue with little change from generation to generation. In a traditional society the social classes form a pyramid, from the peasants and laborers at the bottom to the small group of powerful individuals at the top. The individual's position in the society is normally inherited rather than achieved, except that a group sometimes gains political control of the country by force. Economic productivity is low.

Traditional peasant societies existed thousands of years before the Industrial Revolution, but they did not remain traditional throughout those years. Repeatedly, intensely active periods of innovation occurred, lasting in some societies for a century or so, in others for longer periods, but in none for as long as a thousand years. Empires were formed that developed elaborate city life, political organization and far-reaching administration, built and maintained extensive public works and evolved complex methods of record-keeping and communication. Culture grew around the rim of the Mediterranean continued step by step from pictorial writing to use of the alphabet, from crude methods of record-keeping to the system of using numbers, and from primitive art to the achievements of Greece. The Phoenicians became

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merchants, shippers and colonizers. Scientific advance of note occurred in the several large countries of Asia, in Greece, and in Rome. Noble philosophies were evolved in India, in China, in Greece, in Judea and elsewhere. During the Middle Ages—the centuries between ancient and modern times—in western Europe a series of technical advances in agriculture successively raised its productivity.

Great creativity was needed to achieve these changes; in each case, for a time tradition ceased to rule. In most and perhaps all periods of change inheritance was no longer the only determinant of social position. In every case productivity, broadly defined, increased. However, one characteristic that these pre-industrial departures from traditionalism have in common is that they all ended.

Traditional peasant society, in short, has been a stable situation from which departures have occurred, but they were departures that in the long view were temporary. Although many persons think that the present period of technological progress has caused permanent alteration of the basic characteristics of traditional societies, it is too soon to be sure of that. In any case, in many societies of the present day the full traditional complex is still present or has given way to a sequence of change so recently that the old outlines are still visible.

Since these are the societies in whose future behavior we are especially interested, I shall describe traditional societies in the present tense. As a basis for creating a model of the relationships which cause the traditional state of society to persist century after century, resistant to change, a rather detailed though generalized description of some relationships within traditional societies will be useful.

### TRADITIONAL SOCIETY AS DOUBLE (OR TRIPLE) SOCIETY

A traditional (agricultural) society does not consist merely of peasants or of villagers. Every traditional society of any importance is a double society. It consists on the one hand of villages and on the other hand of some larger towns plus one or more central cities. The cities are the center of government, regional

strong points, or commercial centers.<sup>1</sup> The society consists of peasants and other occupational classes on roughly the same social level, and on the other hand various socially superior groups. I shall refer to the peasants, artisans, craftsmen-shopkeepers and laborers collectively as the simple folk, and I shall describe all other classes as elite,<sup>2</sup> sometimes separating out the great trader-financiers as a distinct third group.

The core of the elite is typically an economically and politically powerful class of landowners such as still exists in almost all Latin American countries; in every Middle Eastern country (excluding Israel), though without political power in Egypt and Iraq; in Ceylon; even in India as it breaks the bonds of tradition, though with their political and economic power much reduced. Around or under this central core are the lesser officials, the doctors, lawyers and other professionals; the writers, teachers and other intellectuals; the religious officials; and the military. The land-owning elite and their families may constitute only a small fraction of 1 per cent of the population. The total national elite, excluding the lowest members of the religious hierarchy and excluding most government employees, with their families may constitute only another 1 per cent of the population. Or, these percentages may be four or five times as great, depending on the cultural and social history of the country.

Below the elite are the peasants, the unskilled laborers, the skilled workers and craftsmen who maintain shops where they sell their products but who are considered craftsmen, not traders. The peasantry far outnumber the others combined. Usually they have higher status than the skilled workers and craftsmen, who in turn scorn the landless agricultural laborers and the unskilled town workers.

### The Great Traders

In traditional societies except small isolated ones there is a class

<sup>1</sup> Sjoberg has noted how greatly the cities of low-income societies today resemble those of the other traditional societies of history. See Gideon Sjoberg, *The Preindustrial City, Past and Present* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1960).

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Robert Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).

of large-scale trader-financiers. The trade they conduct is importing and exporting and domestic trade divorced from production. Their loans may be to peasants and to princes. Despite their economic power, almost nowhere are the trader-financiers accepted by other elite groups as equal in worth or as occupying a natural and proper place in the society.

In the villages of almost all traditional societies great importance is placed on the duty of mutual self-help and on group solidarity; and between the simple folk and the successive layers of the elite there is a sense of mutual obligation and dependence. The trader-financiers do not accept these obligations. They are what can be called the first economic men, caring for themselves first in a manner that is not true of other members of the society and that other members of the society regard as not social and not moral. No doubt this is why in some societies there are no native trader-financiers.

Because of the traditional attitude toward them, perhaps trader-financiers should not be described as elite, and traditional society should be regarded as triple, not double, in its major class divisions. But in their economic power and often in their political power the trader-financiers are elite, and for many purposes it is justifiable to emphasize merely the two-sided character of class structure.

## THE PEASANTS

### The Village

The peasant village consists typically of houses clustered along a single dirt street or a group of streets which cross each other. The typical house consists of one room. Except in a cold country, the floor is the dirt of the ground. Where bamboo grows, the house probably consists of walls of split bamboo and a roof hung on a frame of bamboo poles. The roof is made of palm leaves. In other areas the walls may be made of mud, crude brick, straw, logs, or perhaps tall reeds tied into thick bundles. The houses of the headman, local representatives of the elite such as land-owners, and a few of the wealthier peasants may have a wooden floor and walls partly or wholly of wood or brick.

Somewhere along the street will be the village pagoda or

temple or shrine. If there is a school, it teaches only the most elementary reading and writing and devotes its main efforts to the sacred writings and the traditional virtues. The village meeting place will be the school or religious place. In the center or at the edge of the cluster of houses may be a village well and a tank that holds the village water supply. Nearby may be the village grazing ground and wood lot. On the acres around the village are the fields. Approximately half of the people of the world at present live in villages such as these.

### **The Village Economy**

In most traditional societies virtually every village family except that of the teacher, if there is one, and the priest or monk cultivates the land. In every village there are weaving, sandal making, carpentry, candle making and similar activities. These as well as the maintenance of a tiny village store or shop, if there is one, are usually the part-time occupations of families whose primary position is that of peasants. In some traditional societies full-time craft occupations develop, and in larger villages and towns there develop shops maintained by persons who are not craftsmen and who have no occupation but shopkeeper.

Techniques are crude everywhere. The vehicle for carrying small burdens is the pan on the head. Preparation of the soil is with a wooden plow, possibly with a steel tip, or a hand hoe, followed, if the crop demands, by a harrow—an instrument consisting of a heavy log or board in which wooden sticks project downward. These implements are drawn by an ox, a water buffalo, or a camel. The crop is harvested with a sharp hand tool or pulled by hand, the grains beaten out by being walked upon on the hard ground by oxen or other animals, and then poured repeatedly from head height to the ground so that the wind may blow away the useless part. In these as in other activities with few exceptions the members of traditional societies solve the problems of life by doing as their ancestors did before them.

One of our ideas of the common characteristics of peasant life is that of many millions struggling for subsistence on plots of land one or two or three acres in size. This is true of China, India, Korea and Japan; and of Java, Ceylon and Egypt. In all but a few other peasant societies land is relatively plentiful, and



the peasant family's landholding is as large as one family can cultivate with the techniques and tools in use.

Because land is central in his life, the ownership, or if this is not possible the management, of land is more vital to the peasant than perhaps any other aspect of his material life. In most traditional societies (but excluding China and ancient Greece and Rome) before Westerners introduced transferability of land in the name of progress the peasant had what anthropologists—people who study the customs of the races—describe as “inherited use-ownership” of it.<sup>3</sup> Residence in the village implied holding land. One had land as one had one's name. The land was held not by an individual but by the family, as long as the family remained in the village. If for some catastrophic reason it left the village, it left the land, which others occupied. The overlord, if there was one, had the right to his dues, but the land was not his.

The typical peasant village is not entirely self-sufficient. A group of villages join in periodic markets—typically at intervals ranging between five and ten days—and there is exchange of specialized craft products over a considerable area. If the peasants of the village produce staple products for a foreign market, these are purchased from the peasants by representatives of the great traders, and with the proceeds thus obtained the villagers purchase imported manufactured products and a few staples from abroad or from the central commercial city of the country. All of this trade may be conducted over the most primitive transportation facilities unless colonial rulers have improved them.

### **The Limited Power of the Peasant**

It seems likely that a key causal force shaping both the pattern of social relations and the personality of the peasant is his awareness of the limited extent of his power. To the peasant, life is a mystery in a profound sense in which it is not a mystery to modern man. There is favorable weather, and his crops flourish. Or

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<sup>3</sup> In India, although land was transferable before the coming of the British, apparently in fact occupants were not deprived of their land, and owners to avoid loss of status did not sell the land except to relatives. Thus, (undoubtedly with qualifications) in practice inherited use-ownership prevailed. The same may have been true in the earlier periods of Chinese history and in ancient Greece and Rome.

drought or excessive rain comes, and they fail. Or storms destroy them. His cattle live, bringing moderate prosperity; or they die, bringing disaster. Above all, his wife and his children live or die for causes he cannot clearly understand. Half of his children die before the age of five years; or, if he lives in a less favorable environment, half may die before the age of one. Before all of these events he is helpless unless he can incude the spirits to help him. The major aspects of his personality, and the relationships within his community, I theorize, are closely related to his sense of lack of power.

### **Interpersonal Relationships in the Village**

In such a world, in a family unit consisting of husband, wife and children, the number of children left as orphans by the death of their father would be large, because death strikes frequently at adults as well as at children. Therefore, the logical family unit is the extended family of several generations, in which all feel responsible for all. In the extreme form of the extended family the economic resources of the family are pooled and available to every member subject to the judgment of the family elder. Such a thing as an individual business venture is virtually unknown. The only business unit known or conceived of in the village is the extended family.

Even where the extended family does not exist in extreme form, the family group usually extends to kin of the several generations of living persons descended from the elder, breaking up into smaller groups only when the elder dies and each son becomes a head of his own group of descendants.

The extended family is a close-knit defensive-offensive unit in other than economic ways. Each member is aware of the honor of his family, and its religious and social and other community obligations and rights. Each member is a representative of all the family. Each proper act of an individual casts credit on his family; each wrong act humiliates his family.

One of the peasant's defenses against the hazards and difficulties of life is a system of mutual self-help among members of the village or of the clan group in several villages. Members of the group help each other at planting time or harvest, or perhaps in maintaining paths, or ditches to carry water to the fields. In

some societies the group also helps in house-building, usually at births, deaths, weddings and other ceremonial occasions, almost everywhere whenever disaster strikes. Life depends on this mutual help; many economic functions, and many religious ones of great emotional significance, could not be accomplished without it. No penalty in peasant social life is more compelling than the penalty of refusal of co-operation by the group to an individual who has violated the customary relationships.

It must not be supposed that for the individual the interests of the village have priority over those of his family or that village relations are ideal. The mutual help is not merely the generous action of friends helping each other when help is needed. There is evidence from many studies that peasant families are somewhat hostile toward, suspicious of, or at least cautious of each other. The aggressiveness that is basic in human personality is present in the simple folk even though they may be unconscious of their aggressive tendencies.

There is the most careful observance of the repaying of any obligation in the exchanges of mutual help. The half-days of labor performed, the number of cakes presented at a family celebration, are carefully noted in order that precise repayment may be made when an opportunity occurs. One reason for this careful repayment is the necessity for preventing any family from feeling wronged. Relations within the village must be kept in careful balance. The exchanges among families are not made by contract. Because the members of the village must live in lifelong intimate contact in the insecure world, the enforcement of a rigid contract which caused hardship to a village member might endanger social relationships in the village throughout his life. Similarly the application of rigid rules of civil or criminal law that created an unfair situation for a village member might endanger the structure of relationships on which the village life depends. Therefore, in the typical traditional society there is no contract arrangement and there is no legal code. Each grievance of one individual against another is decided by the elders. When agreement has been reached concerning the action which best reconciles the interests involved, the village headman (or clan head) expresses the agreement as his decision, and his authority seals the decision.

The villager expresses his aggression more freely outside the village than in it. His strong emotional tie is to his community, not his country. A person from outside the village or local group of villages is an alien. In many traditional societies, because he is an alien he is considered dangerous. As an alien he is a target for cheating or robbery, and as a dangerous person he risks losing not only his property but also his life.

### **The Structure of Authority**

The eldest man rules the family and advises it. He rules an age- and sex-based hierarchy, or social group. In probably all traditional societies, after the years of infancy children are expected to accommodate themselves to the convenience of adults. In many traditional societies sisters submit to brothers and younger boys submit to older ones and in turn dominate their juniors and sisters. This set of family rankings is the base of a hierarchy that extends upward to a peak of authority and status at the top of the society, because generally the family or clan acknowledges allegiance to persons who are higher in the hierarchy.

The loyalty is more than ceremonial. Between the peasant and his superior the hierarchical relationship is a relationship of mutual obligation. The inferior owes certain obligations to the superior. The superior owes protection, advice, help in emergency, action as judge or magistrate, support of village festivals, and, not least, ceremonial services such as blessing of the annual festival and appearance on ceremonial occasions and family occasions of emotional importance.

### **Reasonableness, Religion and Magic**

The dependence aspect of the hierarchy extends upward beyond the highest human to the spiritual forces that are seen to control the phenomena of nature. In the practical business of getting his living, the peasant exercises with shrewdness, skill and great reasonableness, a learning accumulated throughout the generations. But in other matters—storm, drought, the quantity of fish in the fishing grounds; death of his crops, his cattle, his kin—he knows that no direct actions of his will bring him security or save him from disaster. He attributes these events, whose causes he cannot see, to the will of unseen forces.



Because direct action is of no use, he seeks by magic or some similar method to induce the spiritual forces to be friend rather than harm him. Thus, in every traditional society the relation to the spirits is a vital matter. It cannot in fact control uncertain events that are emotionally important, but it does relieve worry.

### **The Peasant View of the Social Structure**

Just as it does not occur to the peasant that he can influence any of a wide range of physical phenomena that are of great emotional importance to him, so it does not occur to him that the social structure is responsive to change. He honors the elders of his community; he sees the top elite as in a world far beyond his reach. He looks on the statuses of the groups in his society as higher and lower, and as not merely appropriate but proper. The world is as it is. He shuns the very thought of acting to change it.

## **THE ELITE**

### **Class Structure**

At the center of the elite are the possessors of power in the society, the group of individuals who control the country's land and who receive a considerable share of the nation's income. They may be provincial and ignorant of the world, or educated in the West and widely traveled. In any case, so long as the society remains a traditional one they dominate it. They do not necessarily control by force. Until new ideas came to traditional lands within the past generation, the elite controlled because the peasant thought this inevitable and often thought it right. If he voted in national elections, he automatically voted as his protector or the owner of his land directed.

### **The Elite View of the World**

Many of the elite wear Western clothes, drive Western automobiles, talk of Western art and literature, and to Westerners seem little different from themselves. Indeed, some of them are no longer traditional in their personalities. But mainly, the elite of traditional societies, even today, and including those who are worldly-wise visitors to Western centers, have values, motiva-

tions, a view of the world, and a sense of their identity which differ sharply from those of a typical member of the middle or upper classes of the technologically progressive societies.

In a sense the central elite are all-powerful. Their power, however, depends on their inherited position, not on individual achievement. An individual member of the elite may be able to gain in power at the expense of someone else. However, to each member of the elite this possibility is a threat as well as a promise; and apart from this possibility of shifts of power within the group, life seems greatly dominated by forces beyond their control, just as life does to the peasantry.

The physical environment exercises equally great control over them. Though they are more secure from starvation, their income, being derived from land, depends on the changes of the weather as does that of the peasants. Of deeper emotional importance, their lives and those of their family members are as subject to sudden blows from forces that seem unpredictable and without reason. In a traditional society wealth provides no shield against disease and death. The hazard that a child will suddenly be stricken by disease is great for the elite, as it is for the peasantry, because among the causes of death in traditional societies the lack of community sanitation and the presence of diseases which are not respectful of income or status rank high.

To a member of the elite, in short, as to one of the simple folk, the phenomena of the physical world are a limiting and threatening force against which he is almost helpless. No more than the peasant does he think that his reason and the means at his disposal can prevail against them. This is the great contrast between the elite of traditional societies and the middle and upper classes of technologically advanced societies.

### **The Elite Sense of Identity: Differences from the Simple Folk**

A number of other aspects of elite personality are closely related to the elite belief regarding the nature of the world. One of these is an intense need of the elite to feel themselves different in essence from the simple folk.

In a society in which one can rise by achievement, if a superior position is gained one can feel that it is due to a difference in

capacity to achieve and is therefore morally justified. However, in a society in which privilege and position are gained by inheritance, one must attribute his position to some other cause. It is therefore necessary for the elite to feel that in essence—not because of what they can do, but in what they essentially are—they are different from the simple folk. For this reason it is necessary for them to feel dislike for the distinctive features of the way of life of the simple folk. By feeling dislike for what the simple folk do and like they persuade themselves that they are different and superior and that their superior status in life is justified.

One distinctive characteristic of the simple folk is that they work with their hands, with tools, and in the process become dirty. As a result, any work which soils the hands or clothing, or indeed any "labor," is repulsive to the elite. Even carrying an envelope of papers into one's house when one arrives home from the office seems beneath his dignity to a member of the elite; he has his servant do it. Peasants and craftsmen make physical materials and living things function. Therefore, the elite are not interested in their functioning and would find interest in these matters undignified and a sign of essential inferiority.

These considerations provide part of the explanation of the attitudes toward economic development of elite leaders in present-day societies that are still largely traditional. The leaders may want economic development, if they do not think it will disturb their personal positions, but they want it to occur without their personal involvement. Trade and industrial activity have about them the air of dirty or manual-technical work. Therefore, the typical member of the elite finds them unpleasant. To be the manager of a government-owned business enterprise is good since this is a position symbolic of power; but holding such a position does not imply any concern with the details of managing the business operations. For a member of the elite to be concerned with these everyday matters would destroy a major source of distinction between him and the workers and thus threaten his very identity.

With this background it is possible to understand better the attachment of the elite in traditional society to the land. Apparently without exception, in every traditional society there is

no status higher than that associated with land-owning. Control of land is important because it is a source of security in a perilous world. The land-owning life is good because it distinguishes one from the trader and the businessman. Love of life as a land-owner marks one as being of a superior breed. Therefore, owning land has a value of deep emotional importance.

All groups of the elite possess a view of the world which has important elements in common with that of the land-owner group. The bureaucrats, the professionals and the intellectuals, like the land-owner, preserve their significance in life by preserving the distinction between themselves and the peasantry. The need of professional personnel to hold values separating them from the working class would seem to be less acute than that of the landed groups since their positions depend partly on achievement, not merely on social status. Yet to a considerable extent they succeed as professional men not merely because of ability but because of family connections. Most of the professionals are sons of the landed elite who have gone into the professions because it is proper to do so, the eldest son having inherited the estate.

### **The Elite Sense of Identity: The Role of Authority**

Since it is necessary for the members of the elite to believe that they are of essence superior to the classes below them, they believe that positions of authority belong to them because of who they are. Positions of authority are therefore granted in traditional societies not on the basis of the individual's ability to perform but on the basis of his status. To make selections except on the basis of position in the elite would be to question the inborn right to be elite. To grant position to a person of social inferiority would be offensive. By definition, such persons do not have the capacity to exercise authority.

The use of initiative and the danger that one might be seizing the authority of a superior cause anxiety, or worry, in the members of the elite as well as in the simple folk. Therefore, even the least important questions for whose answer there is no clear precedent, or the handling of which indicates one's authority, will be referred upward and upward to the top official for decision. He will insist on receiving them because the sharing of



authority with his subordinates constitutes an admission of their equality with him in status and raises a question concerning the rightness of his status. Also, obtaining opinions from one's subordinates might indicate the inadequacy of one's right to authority. Therefore, the top official will issue an order without staff help.

Or, if the problem is a new one that is too puzzling to settle immediately, even with his absolute authority, it may simply lie on his desk, postponed. In the traditional system the purpose of giving orders is to indicate one's status as well as to solve a problem or perform a function. In traditional activity the two purposes are similar. But in new activities, where the most effective decision must be made for the first time, to analyze the problem would be to keep it before one for a period during which anxiety might occur. Further, if the problem is one concerned with industry or with trade, then analyzing it has added unpleasantness. Therefore, the elite of traditional societies are uniquely unable to function effectively in technological innovation, and the traditional society is characterized by the absence of creativity.

### **Authoritarian Personality**

The reaction of any individual in any society to new situations contains both some element of pleasurable anticipation at the possibility of using his capacities to deal with the situation and some element of anxiety about whether he can do so effectively. However, to some individuals most new situations are seen as presenting an opportunity, while to others most new situations arouse anxiety. The former are attracted to problems. They may be creative individuals. The latter fail to see the presence of problems because by not doing so they avoid anxiety. They take the world about them as unchangeable and fail to see the possibility of new ways of acting, new modes of solving the problems of the world, because to do so would raise the question whether they can successfully adapt to the new situation, and this would make them anxious. The former are not often found among the simple folk of traditional societies. In traditional societies more than elsewhere individuals feel anxiety in new situations.

The anxiety is avoided or relieved by two types of behavior characteristic of traditional societies. One is relying on tradition. Problems within traditional areas of behavior, such as questions of skill and judgment in cultivating, in bargaining in a market, in discussions within a group, may be settled by discussion and agreement among the elders.

The other method of avoiding anxiety is decision by a person with authority. Only if the decision conspicuously fails, will the matter of testing it have to be faced by other people—and then the action will be to replace the authority who has failed by a new individual. Questions of relationships between people are also resolved when the relative authority rank of two individuals determines which shall control the action.

Once the hierarchical system is established, it is strengthened by a further reaction. By independent decision, even in small matters, anxiety is aroused in oneself not only through the process of making a choice alone but also through the implied challenge to the authority of a superior. By referring matters upward one avoids both problems.

Also, one of the additional benefits of submitting a judgment to superiors is that it sanctions one's exercise of authority over inferiors. Except in his very youngest days every male, even the son of the humblest peasant, his inferiors, whose number grows as he grows in age and status. Even his sister, directing her younger sisters, in due time will become a mother directing a family, and one day will become a mother-in-law to whose wishes, in many traditional societies, her daughter-in-law must bow. If one does feel resentment at being ordered around by an older brother, one can relieve his frustration, or annoyance, on a younger brother. And where one has authority it is not necessary to be so anxious about the rightness of a judgment; it is right because one has authority.

Satisfaction in yielding to the judgment and wishes of superiors and satisfaction in dominating inferiors are interwoven in the personality of the simple folk in traditional societies the world over. And not only of the simple folk. The same attitudes are found among the elite of traditional societies, except that many of them are less patient and therefore more ready to fight for position by the use of force or by taking advantage of personal

relationships. Personalities which gain satisfaction by depending on persons above and controlling persons below, but are uneasy when facing problems or reconciling difficult relationships with equals may be described as authoritarian personalities.

### CLASS RELATIONSHIPS

The belief by the members of the traditional society in the essential superiority of the elite classes is one side of a coin. The other is belief by all classes that the status of the simple folk cannot be improved and that their natural positions in life are established for all time. For individuals of either the elite or the simple folk who have unusual personalities there are special career channels. Thus a member of the non-elite classes, as well as a member of the elite, who possesses exceptional interest in religion may become a monk or holy man. But social classes are largely closed. Except for struggles within the class of the elite itself, class relationships are fixed. Since the lower classes are viewed as of essence inferior, there is no way in which they can earn eliteness. But this class rigidity does not make the simple folk feel that they are bound or imposed upon, because they like both the avoidance of problems, which the authoritarian hierarchy permits, and the release of aggression which their own petty hierarchy of authorities permits.

### **Concluding Comment: The Stability of Traditional Society**

The simple folk feel anxiety in dealing with other persons if the relationship among them is not defined; and they feel relief when the relationship is defined by the simple rule that one is superior in authority and the other inferior. They also feel anxiety in facing problems outside the narrow sphere of their daily work, and feel relief in referring those problems to someone above them for decision. However, this is only true if the person to whom the problem is referred will respect their concern and will consider the problem. Therefore, it is a mistake to picture the simple folk as held in a condition of crushing misery by the compelling power of the classes above them. On the contrary, in traditional societies in which the elites are considerate in dealing with the

simple folk—which unfortunately is not the case in many peasant societies today—the simple folk must feel great satisfaction in traditional authoritarian hierarchical relationships. Traditional social relations persisted for centuries and even for thousands of years through the entire world, not merely because small groups at the top held control by force but because the traditional relationships were satisfying to all concerned.

Indeed, the relationships, practices and beliefs of a society continue without basic change for a long time only if they satisfy the purposes and motivations, conscious and unconscious, of the members of the society. If the basic elements of social structure and culture do not provide this satisfaction, the society changes, although the change may be very gradual.

Today, traditional societies throughout the world are changing because knowledge and contact with the outside world have caused changes in behavior within those societies. But even in the absence of forces from without, some threat to the continuance of traditional social relationships lies in struggles for power within the elite. This is true because in these struggles for power or in measures by the dominant elite to prevent its displacement might lie the seeds of social tensions that could lead to basic social change.



## CHAPTER III

# AUTHORITARIAN AND INNOVATIONAL PERSONALITIES

WE have seen that in traditional societies authoritarian personality is typical. To understand it better and to analyze changes in it more readily, I shall contrast authoritarian personality with what I shall call *innovational* personality.

Innovation involves both arriving at a new mental concept and converting that concept into action or into material form. In technological innovation the conversion may involve only design or rearrangement of some items of physical equipment. Or, it may involve the organization of a group of human beings into an active group that puts a new concept into practice. Both steps in innovation are creative acts, and such creative activity involves problem-solving in a high degree.

Innovation is always innovation in some specific field, involving some specific materials or concepts, or relationships of some sort to other persons. Some types of innovation will involve overcoming resistance by other persons; others will not. An individual will not innovate in a sphere in which he finds dissatisfaction in working. Thus, in addition to creativity, attitudes favorable to working in one or another field are necessary for innovation in that field. In the present chapter I shall discuss the general characteristics of creativity and pay only brief attention to the added characteristics of personality that cause creativity to be exercised in one field rather than another.

## INNOVATIONAL PERSONALITY

### The Quality of Creativity

When it is stated that innovation requires creativity, the term "creativity" does not refer to genius but to the quality of creativity in general, in whatever degree it may be found in a given individual.

The major qualities that constitute creativity are easy to list: openness to experience, and underlying this, a tendency to per-

ceive phenomena as explainable; creative imagination, of which the central part is the ability to let one's unconscious processes work on one's behalf; confidence in one's own judgments; satisfaction in facing and attacking problems; a sense of duty to achieve; intelligence; energy; and often, related to several of these, an understanding that the world is somewhat threatening and that constant effort is required to deal with it successfully.

Thus, the creative person is alert in observing the world around him and his confidence in his own evaluation of his experience. He does not take without question a generally accepted evaluation and overlook facts that might prove it to be false. He has a sense, deeper than any rational acceptance of cause and effect, that the world is orderly; that every phenomenon of life or of some large area of experience is part of a system whose operation can be understood and explained; that if he approaches the sphere of life in which he is interested it will respond dependably, so that if he has enough information he will be able to understand the response.

Creative imagination refers to a tendency to leap far afield from a starting point, to note relationships where others had not thought to find them. It embraces two kinds of mental activity. One is the capacity to use an interesting or unsatisfactory situation as a springboard from which one's imagination roams and then returns to the matter at hand with a workable idea for the reconstruction or transformation of the unsatisfactory situation. The other is the capacity to let one's purely unconscious processes work on a problem. Unaware that his mind has been working on the problem, the individual finds that a solution, an appropriate ordering, an explanation has come to him. These two aspects of creative imagination have two important elements in common: the unconscious processes of the individual are productive rather than distractive in nature; and the individual is unafraid or only slightly afraid of them.

Some individuals react unconsciously to a problem with a sense that they will fail to master it, and with a sense of frustration at the failure they anticipate. As a defense against that sense of frustration, the individual if he allows himself, experiences fantasies, or notions, of magic achievement and often also fantasies of revengefully suppressing persons who have frustrated him. Even if he does not allow himself, such fantasies occur in

his unconscious processes. Other individuals react to the substance of a problem or surprising phenomenon by both conscious logical analysis of it and unconscious imaginative analysis. The mind of an individual who responds in this way unconsciously rearranges elements of thought in bold ways but ways which, when he returns to the details of reality, are fruitful. Every individual responds in some degree in both ways. Creative individuals are those who primarily respond productively.

The individual who responds with unacceptable fantasies may shut them out from his conscious mind, but he senses dimly the emotional surges within him. He is afraid of letting his unconscious processes come to the surface for fear that dangerous or evil urges will appear. Therefore, his unconscious processes are not only primarily unproductive; the results do not appear in his conscious mind. The creative individual, on the other hand, is not afraid of his unconscious processes, and their results appear in his conscious mind. He trusts his own evaluations of them. This does not mean that he is always sure that he is right, but only that he does not have anxiety about his own observations and evaluations.

He feels satisfaction at the prospect of testing his capacities against a problem and is drawn toward the attempt. Because he is not afraid of problems or of the world, he has a tolerance for recognizing the apparent lack of agreement among facts. Their apparent lack of agreement, like any problem, is therefore a challenge to him. As his experience and confidence in his ability grow, he will lose interest in simpler problems and will seek to attack more and more difficult ones, or sometimes merely different ones. The innovator not only feels pleasure in solving problems; he also feels a duty to achieve, a personal responsibility to transform the world that far surpasses a profit motive.

The creative individual is not necessarily a happy man who faces problems with pure pleasure. Rather, most creative individuals are driven to creative activity by an incessant anxiety. This is the product of frustrations of one kind or another experienced in early life. Their concept of the world as a threatening place leaves them only while they are active, then returns to drive them on again. Thus innovational activity is always a reaction to some degree of anxiety.

### **The Determinants of the Innovational Field**

Perhaps we may think of the characteristics which channel and release creativity into one field or another as being of three types: one's values concerning activities, one's anxieties or satisfactions in relationships with other men, and the scale of activity or influence in which one feels content or secure. First, there may be a rather direct attachment to a certain activity. Second, one may find satisfaction in competition with other men, or a sense of security in being able to influence them; or he may feel uneasy in any close competition or co-operation with other men and may turn toward working in isolation. In combination, these characteristics plus the alternatives objectively open to him will determine the occupation in which a man chooses to work. Third, if one is characterized by a drive to influence or direct other men, he may be content to do so on a small scale or, on the other hand, he may feel that he has not sufficiently proved himself secure so long as there are wider groups against which he has not tested himself. One may therefore be content to work in his own pond—perhaps intellectually or technically or socially a very important pond—or one may be driven to seek national influence in his profession or in society as a whole and reform all society.

The choice of technology, or the science of industrial arts, as a field in which to innovate requires one or another of certain combinations of these attitudes. We have noted that the sense of identity of a member of the elite classes in traditional society makes him unable to function effectively in work which he associates with the laboring classes. In general, the authoritarian, personality of traditional society is uncreative. If, however, an unusual individual of the elite classes became creative, he would nevertheless be unable to innovate in technology so long as he retained the elite dislike of manual labor, work with tools and machinery, and interest in the physical world.

### **AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY**

Many characteristics of authoritarian personality are simply the negatives of characteristics of the creative individual. For that reason they may be outlined in a few paragraphs.



One gains an understanding of most of the aspects of authoritarian personality if one assumes that as a child the authoritarian individual perceived the world as dictatorial, subject to sudden changes, and not responsive to analysis. The child also perceived these sudden changes of the world as not accidental but the play of willful powers far greater than his that serve their own purposes and ignore his unless he submits his will to theirs. These views, because the experiences which caused them were very painful, have been pressed down out of his conscious mind into the unconscious. Because they have created fear and rage and dangerous urges he seals over his unconscious processes to the best of his ability. Thus, as we have noted a typical of the uncreative individual, his unconscious processes are unproductive.

He dared not express his rage against the superior authorities who early in life directed him in a dictatorial manner, but once he is an elder in the community, or a father, or even an older brother, he can somewhat satisfy his aggressiveness by his dominance over his inferiors. Also, as he moves to successive positions of authority at successive stages in his life the anxiety he feels in uncertain situations causes him to insist that his own authority not be questioned, just as it earlier required that he submit his judgment to superior judgment and will. Thus each traditional adult individual in traditional society presents strong resistance to the questioning of authoritative decisions or traditional ways. That resistance is an important obstacle to change.

In this brief description of the authoritarian personality we have assumed two things: first, that the authoritarian individual forms certain views of the nature of the world early and second, that these ideas unconsciously guide his later behavior. To justify these two assumptions we must turn to the formation of creative and authoritarian personalities.

FORMATION OF CREATIVE  
AND AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITIES

OUR two assumptions would be justified, even if we had no other evidence, by the fact that they provide a highly acceptable explanation of variations in adult behavior for which we have no other satisfactory explanation. But there is also the direct evidence of social psychology that the ability of a very young child to generalize unconsciously is very great. For example, a child of two or three years of age will sometimes talk of "mouses" or "moneys," will say that one thing is "gooder" than another, or will create such words as "falled" and "runned." The sociologist Robert K. Merton has noted the significance of this. The child has not heard these incorrect word forms used; rather, he has observed how the plurals, the comparatives, and the past tenses of other words are formed. He has *unconsciously* formed a system of grammar in his mind and has applied the rules to words to which the English language illogically does not in fact apply them. This proves that his mind leaps from specific observations to broad generalizations very early in life.

It is easy to understand that with certain parents and brothers and sisters a very young child may arrive at the generalization that it is dangerous and anxiety-creating to use one's initiative, while with other parents and brothers and sisters a child may perceive that it is safe and satisfying to do so. These emotion-filled generalizations he buries in his unconscious mind and does not easily correct later. Even from his earliest experiences the child generalizes broadly concerning the nature of the universe around him, and these generalizations powerfully influence the nature of the individual he will become. They persist in later life and influence his behavior after he has become old enough and informed enough to use his conscious reasoning processes to resolve situations. Also, the home environment from which the individual drew his early opinions, those of say the first half dozen years, typically continues to be a central part of his environment during the next dozen or more years. In addition, in a

stable society the personality types he encounters even in adulthood will be like those he had earlier known in his parental home. His adolescent and adult environments continue to strengthen the early patterns. Thus, to mention only the most important influence of childhood generalizations, if the individual has learned that explorations on his own are likely to lead to pain, he bars himself from observing new facts or unexpected aspects of familiar facts for fear that exploration will revive the pain which is so well preserved in his unconscious processes. Thereby he bars his conscious processes from having materials to work with, and thus prevents the creation of new generalizations.

### **The Stages of Personality Development**

In babyhood the infant learns that he is completely dependent on his environment to satisfy his needs, and that either he can depend on his initiative, the response being safe, dependable, comforting; or he cannot, and gains a sense that initiative is not followed by dependable response. To what degree the baby acquires a sense of trust in himself and in the world, and to what degree a sense of mistrust, is of great importance. His learning to trust his ability to obtain a satisfactory response from the world requires not merely that his bodily needs shall be met dependably but also that their relief shall be accomplished in a manner that is comforting, reassuring and loving. From his mother's confident, smooth movements, caressing touches, relaxed muscles and easy and caressing voice he gains a feeling that the world is a secure place. If he is fussed over needlessly by an anxious mother, or handled abruptly by an impatient or irritated mother, or handled by a mother whose main interest at the time is elsewhere he learns that the world does not respond to him, and thereby threatens him, even though his bodily care is adequate. If he is to trust, he must feel that his environment, at this stage almost wholly his mother or her substitute, is trustworthy.

The stage of intimate nourishing of babyhood must be followed by a process of separation from the source of nourishment. The child is gradually removed from nourishment at his mother's breast. He is removed also from petting or bodily contact, from the close response of his mother to his cries and smiles, from her physical presence whenever his attention turns to her. And he

must learn self-control. He is compelled to control the timing of his expression of his urges, the object toward which he will express them, and the nature of his expression of them.

The timing, nature, and emotional tone of the compelling of this control vary greatly. If the demands are made by individuals who give him a sense that they have regard for his urges and desires, and at a time when he is capable of complying, the demands may not change his view of the world as an understandable place which responds in a pleasing way to one's initiative. If, on the other hand, the demands are made by individuals whose attention is centered on their own anxieties and impulses, at a time when the demands bewilder him because his bodily system as yet has only the first weak undependable stirrings of the necessary capacities, then he learns that the world is a bewildering place, impossible to understand; and he learns also the tremendous importance of complying with dictatorial and inconsiderate demands of important persons around him. This is true, for example, of learning to walk, to talk, to control his bowel movements, and of many other activities that are very important to the child.

During this period of babyhood he matures physically; he acquires increasing control of his muscles and a growing ability to explore the expanding world about him. He exercises initiative toward his environment, initiative which depends in part on his inherited physical tendencies; he is by no means merely an inactive reactor. But while he acquires capacities automatically, he learns activities only as he observes other individuals using the capacities which he is finding in himself. Without models he would not learn to walk upright or to talk. Neither would he learn the many ways of thinking and acting that make him, as an adult, a normal member of his society. He learns abilities, interests and activities at the urging of the persons most important to him, but he does not blindly imitate them simply because their example exists. Rather, he responds to the stimulation presented to him by their relationship to him, and, within the limits of what their examples suggest to him as possible, he reacts in the ways that he thinks will best serve his interests. While he is learning the abilities of his body, he is also learning how to handle the increasing range of problems he encounters.



## Parenthood and the Child's Explorations

In his explorations the child needs two types of aid. He needs encouragement demonstration and advice. Also, his excitement when the learning is successful may lead to unrestrained action which is destructive and thereby provokes alarm or anger, punishment and rejection. He needs guidance and restraint.

He also needs to feel that he is valued. A child whose parents do not show an adequate degree of love for him is unable to learn effectively from their teaching or example. It is as though, since they do not have regard for his needs and desires in life, he distrusts their advice and example and repels them. Indeed, the degree to which a child feels valued and responded to as he grows probably has an important effect on the level of intelligence he exhibits in later life.

Parents who by instinct understand themselves and therefore their child may give him exactly the aid and guidance that will make the process of exploration most satisfying to him. They encourage his explorations but close off areas of danger to him and move out of reach things that might hurt him or that he might damage. As he needs a bit of assistance, they provide it. As he succeeds, they reward him with love. They restrain him as he discovers his new powers, so that he neither harms himself nor acts destructively. If this is the set of responses which meet his expanding capacities, he learns to trust his own evaluations, learns satisfaction in facing unresolved situations and trying to resolve them. In general, these responses reinforce the feeling he no doubt had gained earlier in such a home that the world responds dependably and satisfyingly to his initiative.

At first the mother's care was the centrally important element, but during this period the attitudes and acts of the father become increasingly important.

## Rage

The tendency to rage when one's desires are frustrated is probably inborn. When a need of the infant remains unsatisfied until it reaches an intensity sufficient to cause anxiety in him, he rages. He is likely to feel rage when he is separated from the intimate nourishment of his babyhood; at the other processes of separation he also rages unless they are delayed until the time when he

chooses the separation himself and can return to dependence whenever he chooses. Rage is unavoidable at teething, and he rages as successive demands for self-control are imposed upon him. If rage builds up in him, its results will be important elements of his personality. However, if his mother responds to his rages with composure and love, and he gets a sense from her total relationship to him that the restraints and demands on him make sense and neither threaten him nor are attacks on him, less rage is aroused, and that which is aroused seems to lessen.

### **The Identification Process**

As his self-assurance grows, in say the fourth and fifth years, the boy wants to be big like his father. He may walk like his father, talk like him, and assume his other mannerisms. He not merely imitates his father; he almost literally identifies himself with his father to the extent that his father is acceptable to him as a model.

He is likely to acquire not only his father's mannerisms and methods of physical behavior, so far as he can, but also his father's values and attitudes toward life as the son understands them. If the father envies or admires the political leader or businessman—or on the other hand regards business as a dirty and unpleasant vocation—so will the son. If the father loves work on the soil, the son too will be likely to find satisfaction and peace in it. So also with attitudes toward work with the hands, with tools, toward intellectual activity and exploring the physical world. The process of identification with satisfying models has much to do with the transmission of a society's traditional values to successive generations. Above all, if the child has learned security and satisfaction in exploring the world, at this time he will observe his father's adult behavior and begin to turn his mind toward the problem of training himself to perform a man's occupational role.

Of course the model presented by his father is not the only model from which he learns. From observing his mother he also learns many ways of behavior. More generally, both during this period and later, he learns by imitating all of the models around him that are attractive and important to him and by behaving in ways opposite to models that are unpleasant and promise ill

results rather than good. The initial inclination toward the career that he follows in adult years may be provided in this period of his life.

### **The World as Understandable**

A centrally important aspect of the child's experience is whether he learns to feel that the world is an understandable even though never fully understood place, and that achieving understanding yields satisfaction.

To any baby the world is at first wholly confusing. Then, as his experience causes him to focus his attention on some part of it, he may find that his urges and actions bring responses that seem appropriate. When he is hungry his hunger causes nourishment to appear; when he accomplishes the surprising new feat of sitting up in his bed, his environment (his mother) expresses delight; when he is lonely, loving attention occurs and gives him security; as he tries new capacities in infancy and early childhood, harm or anxiety rarely result, and pleasure and approval regularly do. If so, he acquires a sense that initiative meets with dependable response, that one can count on the world to make sense. I suggest that this sense of dependable response to initiative, the feeling that the world is understandable and that discovering and exploring it are satisfying, creates in the individual the "openness to experience" or "capacity to be surprised" that is at the heart of creativity.

Dependability, it may be noted, is not enough. If, for example, the baby's mother feeds him dependably every five hours, but pains of hunger begin to arise in his body at four hours and cause him rising anxiety and terror until nourishment finally is given, he may feel that the world is dependable in its infliction of pain, but he will not be able to understand it.

A sense that the world as one encounters it progressively will be a dependable and understandable place does not, on the other hand require that all of the child's urges and initiative shall meet satisfying responses. It is impossible that they shall do so. Even under ideal circumstances he will encounter some anxiety and some frustrations. Also, some whole areas of his experience may be rather painful and bewildering while others are satisfying. If so, shall he decide that the world is based on chance and

impossible to understand or merely that its behavior is complex? Thus, if a boy's mother responds—dependably and consistently—to his urges while his father at times satisfies his needs for care and attention but more often is irritable and inconsiderate and causes him pain, does he perceive life as impossible to understand, or does he decide that much of the world is understandable but somehow his father is different?

The answer probably depends on several factors. It must depend, firstly, on his intelligence. The higher his intelligence, the greater his capacity to see order rather than casual chance in complexity. It depends, secondly on how secure a sense of basic trust he has acquired before he comes in contact with dictatorial behavior. If his needs for care and attention have been deeply and richly satisfied during the first year or two of his life, he is more likely than otherwise to respond to bewildering behavior later by assuming that the world is all right in general and that there merely is some aspect of it whose management is more difficult than he had assumed. As a result, his reaction depends on how much experience he has had before the bewildering behavior occurs. He will be less likely to be shaken by dictatorial action if it occurs after he has had say three years of regarding the world as dependable.

Thirdly, the result probably depends on the degree to which he sees other models of the same general class as the one which is impossible to understand but whose behavior is more dependable. A child with a dictatorial father but who also has contacts with an uncle and grandfather whose behavior sustains his confidence in the reasonableness of the world is more likely than otherwise to perceive that something understandable lies behind the variability of his father's behavior even though the basis of variability is not yet within his ability to understand.

It is a reasonable speculation that the child becomes more resourceful and more creative the greater the number of differing understandable models he comes in contact with in emotionally favorable backgrounds. For example, he probably is more creative if his father and mother differ in their attitudes toward life so long as the differences do not create tensions between them and cause him emotional problems.

If a child perceives that the world is understandable and can



be managed, he almost certainly gains at the same time the feeling that he is valued. If in his early development he acquires the feeling that he is valued and securely cared for, he will be able without great anxiety to accept delays and minor frustrations. He will also be able to accept restrictions from the persons who value him, secure in the sense that the restrictions must be necessary. In the course of his exploration of the world he will come to understand that other persons have purposes and needs, as he does, and that reasonable adjustment by him or reasonable requirement imposed on him to adjust his purposes to theirs does not threaten him but gives him a more secure place in his expanding environment. Also, if the individual feels that good things result when he does what seems reasonable and feels also that the environment values him highly, he need feel no anxiety when someone else's judgment differs from his.

### **The Anxious Innovator**

The foregoing does not mean that under the circumstances we have described the child is wholly free from anxiety. Also, in previously noting the presence of a type of anxiety that does not restrain creativity but motivates it, we have minimized the fact that anxiety almost certainly contains a quality that restrains creativity to some degree.

Suppose that in the infant's period of complete dependence his parents' care of him gives him a secure feeling of being loved and cherished. Suppose, also, however, that his mother is somewhat anxious that he shall be a capable and effective person. As the infant's capacities develop, her love and considerateness keep her from making demands upon him that are too unreasonable; but she urges him to crawl, to talk, to walk, to throw, and so on just a little before each capacity is fully developed, so that each achievement is possible for him but somewhat difficult.

Her loving attention gives him the impression that she would not ask anything unreasonable of him. Therefore he is likely to feel that neither she nor he but rather the difficulty of the task is responsible for the initial difficulty with which he meets her requests. Because her love is important to him, and her sense of the importance of his actions communicates itself to him, he strives; and because her thoughtfulness keeps her from making

the request too soon, he is able to succeed, though not with ease. The pleasure and affection which flow out from her at each success gives him intense satisfaction, because anxiety followed by pleasure provides a powerful motivating force and makes a deep and lasting impression.

Consequently, the individual who has had this kind of experience in early childhood anticipates success each time he tries to achieve later in life, because this was the pattern of his early strivings. However, because success is not an assured result, he forever feels a need to try another task and reassure himself.

The results, then, are impressing upon his mind of the following unconscious processes:

1. When he is not attacking problems, he is filled with restlessness (a manifestation of anxiety), which leaves him while he is striving and only temporarily satisfied by each success, reappears as he relaxes.

2. Often this anxiety takes the form of a deep sense of duty to perform.

3. However, to the extent that the individual learned in childhood to blame not his mother or himself but rather the difficulty of achievement for his anxiety, he does not feel rage and therefore experiences no inadmissible urges or fantasies. Therefore, he has no defensive need to seal over his unconscious processes, and they remain available to aid him in creative endeavors.

Such a case, where the child's anxiety is associated with no restriction whatever on his creativity, is probably purely imaginary. Inevitably one element in the anxiety-producing situation is the pressure someone is putting on him to achieve, and, no matter how great the earlier sense of being loved and cherished by that person, that pressure is certain to provoke some rage. If the child feels rage, he also feels urges and fantasies, or notions, which he must repress from consciousness. His resulting fear of admitting the existence of those urges and fantasies must cause him to be somewhat guarded in accepting concepts from his unconscious processes and so must limit his creativity in some degree. However, the limitation may not be severe. Also because much innovation may result from only moderate creativity combined with intense drive, a highly anxious individual may be a

more effective innovator than an individual with high creative capacity but less motive to use it.

To appreciate the role of anxiety in personality and behavior, it is important to note that anxiety is often largely unconscious. The anxiety referred to here is due to early experiences which caused pain. To lessen the pain the individual repressed memory of the experiences from consciousness. Because he repressed the memory he is also forced to deny that the events caused him anxiety; therefore he represses the anxiety as well. But the fact that he is not aware of his anxiety or of the needs associated with it does not lessen the importance of those needs as determinants of his behavior all his life.

### AUTHORITARIAN PARENTHOOD IN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

We have been considering parenthood that is considerate of the child's urges and needs. Suppose, at the other extreme, that the parents are authoritarian. They see the world as consisting of objects or events over which they have no control except in the narrow area of traditional craftsmanship, within which their control is gained by the learning of traditional skills. Because the available evidence suggests that such parents are typical in the traditional society, the essential characteristics of the generalized description below are probably a fairly faithful reflection of childhood environment in almost every such society.

#### **Early Indulgence and Later Control**

Unconsciously remembering the unreasonable nature of the events of their own childhoods, against which their initiative led only to frustrations, such parents think of a child as rather defenseless against the world and incapable of developing its own ability to act and react against the world. They think of the child as an object that at first is fragile and must be protected and perhaps indulged, and then as it grows older must be trained by detailed guidance in the way in which it ought to go.

Fearing that the child may injure himself or come to harm, the parents overprotect and restrain him even while in a sense they indulge him. Weaning, or removing the child from breast

feeding, is often late and gradual. The small child is likely to be picked up instantly if it cries or is alarmed. However, it may not feel any love or tenderness from this attention, because the child sometimes seems to be treated almost as if it were to blame for its discomfort or alarm. It may also be allowed to talk continuously or wander about as its parents engage in conversation, and to accompany its mother wherever she goes. It is not checked from its talking or from interfering with the adult group, but it often finds no response to its initiative; it simply is not paid attention to.

It is a mistake to assume that authoritarian parents thus create an environment of early childhood characterized by great permissiveness. Childhood environment in traditional societies is one of indulgence or toleration combined with protective restraint. The difference is important. The child, being thought without resources of its own, is prevented from using its initiative. In word, tone and bodily action adults may express fear and alarm of its ventures, and so may prevent it from using its growing capacities even though they are ready to be used and observations by the child create urges in it to use them. At its slightest wandering, it may be picked up; if it begins to crawl it may be seized and carried instead. It may be borne on its mother's hip or back throughout the entire crawling period, so that it is given almost no chance to push itself about until it is fully able to walk. This treatment must breed in the child as strongly as would more positive controls a sense that the world is not responsible to its initiative but is unreasonable and unmanageable, a sense of being unable to understand why things are as they are and by what action one can get along.

But as the child grows and is no longer fragile, protectiveness becomes control. The prime duties of the child become to learn a certain set of rules: not to bother adults, but on the contrary to exhibit respect for them; to reflect the family's position in the community; not to get the family into trouble; to learn the traditional skills; to pay due respect to the spiritual powers. The parents subject him to a daily repetition of directions. Except in the traditional skills of his class, there is no assumption that he has any organizing abilities within him and can learn to resolve problems. His parents do not guide or assist him; they control



his development. The child's actions that spring from his own initiative will often seem to have little meaning and will be suppressed. This suppression will cause him to feel a sense of failure, a sense that he does not understand how one can proceed in life and must seek for direction. In the name of training, the parents unintentionally give him the feeling that except in a few activities the use of his own initiative is an anxious process and that anxiety is to be avoided by submitting to authority. He has no models that would teach him that differences among individuals can be reasoned about, understood and reconciled or compromised, and so he sees domination by one individual or the other as the only solution.

But he also rages, and, observing that larger dominate smaller and senior dominate junior, he releases some of his rage by dominating his juniors and finds it satisfying. His parents, consciously or unconsciously, are aware of his rages and of the necessity of building a defense against the danger that those rages will turn against them. This is the reason for the extreme importance placed in probably every traditional society on deference by the child toward adults and especially toward his parents.

### **Source of Satisfaction**

From this description of authoritarian childhood one might conclude that life is a pretty grim affair for the child in traditional society. This is not true. The circumstances of his childhood fit into the life pattern of his society, and on the whole he finds them good.

He finds three sources of satisfaction in his life. First, it is assumed he can learn traditional skills. Even though this learning involves closely following traditional models, for the child it requires the solution of a series of problems and the repeated testing of the capacities developing in him. His satisfaction in their effective exercise and in his parents' pleasure at this performance must give him considerable pleasure.

Part of this learning consists of imitating or participating in his father's occupation. That occupation being readily understandable even at an early age, he will follow his father about and will participate in the smaller tasks. In a land-owning family

he may have his own pony and ride about directing the hired hands like his father. Because the exercise of traditional activities is the only area of behavior in which he is encouraged to use his initiative, he will turn to them the more eagerly, and he will find it the more satisfying as an adult to cling to them.

A second source of pleasure lies in the fact that the child is provided with an outlet for his rage. Releasing his aggression on persons junior to him gives him just as true satisfaction as would satisfying his need for achievement or any other need.

Third, the behavior of his parents is not openly angry or tense but seems a reasonable part of a way of life. It is an essential part of a set of relationships satisfying to them, which he may look forward to entering into when he becomes an adult. This perception strengthens the satisfaction he obtains in the permitted release of his rage. His anticipation of successively senior hierarchical roles as his life proceeds is satisfying to him and compensates him for his frustrations. Therefore, he represses his aggressive tendencies and his desire to dominate, but they persist in his unconscious processes, and all his life he releases them in his relationships to inferiors.

### **Religion and the Meaning of Life**

Since the early initiative of the child led to alarm and pain, he learned a general fear of exercising initiative. Also, he was often snatched up by his elders in alarm as he explored the simple physical world immediately around him. Thus he probably learned a specific apprehension concerning the physical world.

The individuals responsible for his early anxiety and pain were his parents. However, it is unbearable to him to hold them responsible; they are so important to him that he dares not keep the thought that they do not hold his purposes and needs in high regard. Therefore, he represses from his conscious mind the knowledge that the behavior of his parents was the source of his bewilderment, anxiety and pain.

However, the pain and anxiety stay within him, and he asks himself why they exist. With this problem in his emotions, the child becomes aware that his elders regard the physical world as containing forces that dominate life and are threatening and unmanageable. They fear for their crops, their health, the lives

of their animals and of the members of their families. Their fears are obviously justified by the events that occur. They attribute those events to the actions of unseen powers that act unreasonably or unpredictably or at least without regard for the welfare of individual human beings. And they relieve their anxiety concerning such events by appeal to those spiritual forces. Humbly, they make offerings or perform magic rites in the plea that their crops or their animals or their lives may be spared. As they thus approach the spiritual forces, their anxiety is relieved.

As he comprehends this behavior, the child sees an explanation of the problems that have been tormenting him. The source of his anxiety is the presence in the world of unreasonable forces that control his destiny. And he has been shown pain to teach him to bow humbly before these spiritual powers in order that they may bless his life and to enable him to prove by enduring the pain that he is worthy of their favor. Also, his relationship to the powerful humans about him is similar to their relationship to the spiritual powers. In these realizations he finds an explanation of his anxiety and pain. They gain meaning. He learns to believe in the rightness of authoritarian behavior, in the spiritual forces and in the wrongness of intruding on their authority with a belief that surpasses reason and makes reason unnecessary. In the technology of production his efforts become concentrated not on technical explorations that the modern world would describe as rational but on methods of appeasing the spirits and assuring their favor.

Having solved the problem of pain by this interpretation of the nature of the world, the members of traditional society cannot imagine the world as subject to management by their initiative and intelligence, because that conception, by denying that discretionary forces rule the world, would destroy the justification for pain. Thus a supremely powerful motive for not intruding on the realm of the spiritual forces presses on the individuals of traditional peasant societies.

In this coincidence of belief and early unconscious awareness lies much of the explanation of the transmission of culture from generation to generation. Culture is transmitted from generation to generation not primarily in memory but in personality.

Let it be clear that this motive presses on the members of the

elite, or upper classes, as well as the simple folk. The members of the elite too experience authoritarian parenthood, live within the same social structure and incorporate the same attitude toward the forces which they believe control that world. They feel the same pain in childhood when their explorations lead to authoritarian domination of their activities by their parents; the belief that discretionary forces which one must approach with respect and ritual rule the world fits their early experience as nearly as that of the simple folk; and in the maintenance of their relationship to those unseen forces they find the same justification for pain as do the simple folk.

## CHILDHOOD AND ADULTHOOD

The formation of personality is not completed in infancy and early childhood. It proceeds throughout life. Every event until death has some effect on personality. However, the events of later life never cause the process of personality formation to begin anew, as though childhood had never occurred; rather, reinforce or conflict with, and build upon, the personality traits impressed on the mind in childhood.

An individual possesses as an adult a clear view of the nature of the larger environment within which he lives only if the relationships of that environment are consistent with those of the little world of his childhood. If the two conflict, he will at best be confused. And no individual will be effective in any social role as an adult who has not found it necessary, effective and satisfying to act in a similar way in the little world of his childhood.

Thus no individual becomes a reformer of his community or society who does not feel both that the institutions of his community or society threaten him deeply and that they can be changed by his efforts. No individual feels this who did not in childhood feel that the behavior toward him of his parents and of other persons who governed him in childhood threatened him, and also that he dared to resist the childhood threat (for example, by evading a brutal and arbitrary father, or defying a self-centered and inconsiderate mother).

Similarly, no man feels that a satisfying career lies in working with the elements of the physical world around him to make



them serve him more productively who did not find as a child that he could attack problems of the miniature environment of his home with success and satisfaction. In these profoundly important ways the child is father to the man.

It does not follow that some important problem of the larger environment is always similar to the problem which an individual solved as a child. Where it is not, the individual may live his adult life in little relationship to the larger world. But where it is, the tendencies created in him as a child may have important social consequences. Thus, it follows that his life within his society is not satisfying to an adult unless it gives meaning to the problems he explored as a child and found it necessary to repress into his unconscious processes. That is, life is not satisfying unless it provides justification for the pains that were bewildering in childhood.

If it does, the result is not that he no longer feels the pains but that they are tolerable. Because the individual can interpret the pain he suffered in his authoritarian infancy and childhood as needed to teach him to be humble before the spiritual powers that rule his adulthood in an authoritarian fashion, that pain becomes tolerable, and indeed now unites him with his fellows (since he entreats the spiritual powers on behalf of his entire group) rather than isolating him.

In addition, I suggest that no social system will be satisfying and thereby stable which does not provide an acceptable outlet for the rage which childhood pain provokes, rage which persists throughout life even though unconsciously. In traditional society that rage can be released by dominating everyone below one in the social system. In most traditional societies it can also be released in more open form against outsiders. I suggest that in a culture which provokes rage (as all must) but provides no appropriate outlet the rage will burst forth in unacceptable channels and the social system will change.

## PERSONALITY FORMATION AND THE STABILITY OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

WE have been discussing personality formation in theoretical phrases. To give some specific examples of childhood in traditional societies, and to provide a basis for generalizations concerning the stability of traditional societies, I shall quote directly from the descriptions by skilled observers of childhood in Burma and Indonesia. And I shall suggest that while the detailed methods of childhood training and the reasons by which practices are justified vary among cultures, the essential elements of parent-child relationships and the personality type that emerges are the same in all other traditional societies as in these two.

### CHILDHOOD IN BURMA AND JAVA

#### Burma

The description of childhood in Burma is primarily that of Hazel M. Hitson, who spent some months in 1957 and 1958 studying personality in a village 20 miles from the capital city Rangoon. I shall also quote briefly from an account by Lucien M. Hanks, who spent part of a year at the end of World War II among the Arakanese, a people of western Burma closely related to the Burmese culturally.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Hitson writes:

The [Burmese] family is a unit created to serve the needs of the father. Obedience is required by mother and children

<sup>1</sup> Lucien M. Hanks, "The Quest for Individual Autonomy in the Burmese Personality," *Psychiatry*, Vol. XII (1949), pp. 285-300; Hazel Marie Hitson, "Family Patterns and Paranoid Personality Structure in Boston and Burma" (Ph. D. dissertation, Radcliffe College, April, 1959). See also Margaret Mead (ed.), *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* (Paris: United Nations, 1953), chap. iii. I also rely on my own observations in Burma. Hanks' interpretation of the meaning for personality of the facts he observed stresses aspects other than those presented here.

alike. Children are subdued in the presence of their fathers and are kept out of the way when guests are present. The father must protect the family in time of trouble. . . . Children must stay out of serious trouble to avoid his wrath and to prevent his becoming involved in fights with fathers of other children.<sup>2</sup>

Indulgence begins early . . . An infant must not be allowed to cry for fear he will have fits; so every attempt is made to quiet and comfort him, and since it is assumed that when a child cries, he is hungry [he is fed on demand, night and day]. After he is three months old he is permitted to cry a while without immediate attendance if the mother is busy, but not for long, for fear crying will become a habit and it will not be easy to comfort him. . . . [Later] he is frightened to prevent his crying. He is threatened with being given away to strangers. He is frightened by being told that a big dog, an Indian, a stranger, a ghost, thunder, etc., will come and carry him away.<sup>3</sup>

Hanks notes:

The people who hold and laugh at the child are free of obligation to him. At any moment they may hand him to someone and depart as if he were a doll or pet monkey.

Although a child may experience few [observable] shocks by this treatment, there is a fragility in his relations to people. . . . Bathing, smearing with [sweet-smelling] paste, dressing, and guarding may be done by one of a number of mother substitutes. Males seldom tend to these affairs of toilet; but at any other time of day the child may be with his father at a gossip session, cock-fight, or wrestling match. All these attentions are voluntary, thus [increasing] their warmth and enthusiasm; but since they are given without obligation, at any moment they may end [suddenly]. There may be warmth and affection, but it lacks continuity and dependability.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> "Family Patterns," p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Same as above, pp. 73-75.

<sup>4</sup> "The Quest for Individual Autonomy," p. 290.

Miss Hitson's account summarizes parental attitudes concerning the ability of children to bear responsibility:

It is assumed that children will not figure things out for themselves. It is felt that they have to be taught to do everything. It is said that without being told, children will know only how to play and to eat.

There are no regular duties assigned to children that they are expected to do each day without being told. In the early years children are told what to do whenever parents want them to do something. Later, their tasks become more and more regular, but they are told every day, two or three times a day, to do the same job. Children say that if their parents do not tell them to do anything, they play. They say they do not know why they always wait to be told what to do, but they do. Finally, after years of repetition, children come to know their own work and to do it without being told. It is expected that children will carry out orders given, but that, in the parents' absence, they cannot be trusted in this until girls are eleven, twelve or thirteen years old and until boys are thirteen, fourteen or fifteen years old. There is no suggestion that children should anticipate the wishes of their parents by going ahead and doing things without being told.<sup>5</sup>

The transition from seeming indulgence to insistence on willing submission to elders is suddenly completed for a boy at about the age of eight. After being treated with a day of ritual honor he is delivered to a group of monks and taken to a monastery where, performing lowly tasks and trained in learning by repetition for hours at a time, he is subjected to unrelieved harsh discipline. Though today the period with the monks may be only two weeks, in pre-colonial Burma it was a full rainy season, three or four months.

He is not entirely unprepared for the harshness of the treatment since he has already learned that persons of authority treat one as an object without capability or responsibility. Yet the harshness of the life with the monks must drive the lesson home with a shock.

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<sup>5</sup> "Family Patterns," p. 122.



Rather than quote further details of Miss Hitson's account, it will be useful to cite a large part of her summary of the essential characteristics of the parent-child relationship:

*Family Culture*  
*Attitudes toward Children*

In Burma the first basic assumption parents make is that children are to be used:

- a) They are to run errands for parents and elders and are to do things for them. . . .
- b) Children are to be teased as a form of enjoyment for elders, and a child's sensitive areas and special fears are used to make it more effective. . . .
- c) Children are to be blamed instead of adults whenever possible. . . .

Secondly, it is assumed that children are unimportant:

- a) They are not completely formed human beings . . . and need not be treated as well as adults.
- b) They are viewed as not knowing, not understanding, and are talked about as though they had no feelings. Anything is discussed before children as though they were not present.
- c) They are believed to be dirtier than adults and are not permitted to sit on mats adults use.
- d) They need not be thanked for doing things for elders. . . .

Thirdly, it is assumed that children will be difficult to control unless they are made to obey through use of fear and force:

- a) Parents like [to have] children afraid of them so they will obey.
- b) It is felt that children who are praised directly will think too much of themselves and will grow lazy.
- c) Boys are thought to be more difficult to raise than girls and must be beaten more.
- d) Children who are [over-indulged] are naughty and become bad when they grow up. . . .

An environment that reflects these assumptions of course creates frustrations and provokes rage. The parents expect

children to do things which are formally described as bad when the parents are not present to prevent them. Thus provided with a channel for their rage, children are highly aggressive in play.

The aggressive behavior of any child toward neighbor children or strangers is automatically right in the eyes of his parents unless it causes them trouble. Since the status of the family is of supreme importance, if the aggression is exposed by a powerful family, or causes others to join together against a family whose child has offended, the parents may suddenly turn, and the child then receives a severe beating. His error lies not in having been aggressive, cruel, or dishonest but in having caused the family to lose status.

The parents can hardly be said to train the children. Rather, they rule them, perhaps loosely, perhaps amusedly. However, against one display of rage, rage toward one's parents, there is severe training. Great importance is attached to teaching the child deference toward his elders. It is at first enforced by authority and then by extreme emotional penalties.

The experience with the monks of course reinforces it. The importance attached to it suggests unconscious awareness of a tendency toward hatred of elders so strong that powerful defenses must be erected against it. Boys become unable to function independently in the presence of elders or superiors, relying on the elders or superiors for judgment.

## Java

A study of the early years of Javanese childhood by Hildred Geertz will be quoted more briefly.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Geertz's account illustrates vividly how within gentle and seemingly nourishing and cherishing care the characteristics which I have termed "authoritarian" may appear. Except for the italicized Indonesian words,

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<sup>6</sup> In order to quote Mrs. Geertz's precise words without undue length rather than to summarize or paraphrase, I have intermingled quotations from two descriptions by her, one in an article "The Vocabulary of Emotion: A Study of Javanese Socialization Processes," *Psychiatry*, Vol. XXII (August, 1959), pp. 225-37, and the other, more detailed, in her book, *The Javanese Family* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, Inc., 1961). I shall refer to these sources as "Vocabulary" and *Javanese Family*, respectively, in later footnotes in this chapter.

the italics are mine.

The Javanese feel that a baby is extremely [sensitive], especially to sudden shock which can lead to sickness or death. . . . All the customs of infant care can be seen as attempts to [avoid] this danger.

The baby is handled in a relaxed, completely supportive, gentle, unemotional way. . . . A crying baby is rarely heard. . . .

The baby spends most of his time, especially after the first few months cradled on his mother's hip as she walks here and there about her work. . . .

A child, especially in the first two phases [infancy and early childhood, or until five or six years of age], is said to be *during djawa*, which literally means "not yet Javanese." . . . This term implies that the person is not yet civilized, not yet able to control emotions in an adult manner, not yet able to speak with the proper respectful [indirect expressions] appropriate to different social occasions. Such a person is also said to be *during ngerti*, "does not yet understand," and therefore it is thought that there is no point in forcing him to be what he is not or punishing him for faults which are incomprehensible to him. These two related notions, of being *djawa* and *ngerti* sum up for the Javanese their ideas of maturity and adult personal relationships, and they are the key to the whole complex of such ideas that are communicated to the growing child. But in the first phase of his life and for most of the second phase, these [standards] for judging behavior are [suspended]. . . .

When he is about 14 months old—or sometimes much later, if no younger [baby] has intervened—the mother weans the child [or removes it from breast feeding]. Almost from the beginning of his life he has been given supplementary feeding, in the form of banana mush, rice and other [mild] foods, so that there is usually little [shock] associated with weaning. It is interesting, however, that *the mothers are much afraid of upsetting the child* by a too abrupt or severe weaning, and try to make it as gradual as possible. . . . Sometimes a mother's timidity . . . about weaning [is] such that the child *goes through a long period of inconsistent treatment*, being weaned and then

returned to the breast, and then weaned again. . . .

Walking is another significant transition, one which is given a peculiarly Javanese flavor, for until the child's muscles are developed enough for him to actually support himself erect, *he is permitted to move about alone*. A Javanese baby misses the crawling stage entirely. All during his infancy he is carried about by his mother in a sling-like shawl on her hip. He hangs there, [inactively] close to the breast where he may [suck when he wishes], and is given constant attention by his mother. . . . His every wish is anticipated, and *he is expected to have no initiative of his own*. . . . The long period of being supported on the mother's hip must be related to the adult's tendency toward [inactive] spectatorship rather than active participation in the world around him.<sup>7</sup>

With the accomplishment of weaning and walking, the main characteristic of the second phase is that the child now can move independently of the mother, and some sort of social rather than merely physical control of his actions is needed. The most common techniques used in this early period are first, detailed, unemotional instructions to the child, unaccompanied by threats of punishment from the parents; but second, threats of horrible fates at the hands of outsiders or spirits if the child is bad. Actual punishment by the family members themselves is rare, and threats of withdrawal of love are never employed. No demands are made on the child until he is considered old enough to comprehend verbal instructions. These are delivered in a calm, steady stream by the adults. . . . The assumption seems to be that the child is completely without resources of his own with which to face . . . little everyday problems. . . . *There is no attempt or desire to let the child develop initiative or independence*. . . .

During the period of weaning and learning to walk, the father begins to take an interest in the child. . . . While mothers are described as "loving" (*trisa*) their children, *fathers are expected only to "take pleasure" (seneng) in them*. . . . It is the mother who instructs the child in social forms, *who makes countless decisions for him*, and who performs most punish-

<sup>7</sup> "Vocabulary," pp. 230-31.



ments. . . . Only from the end of the child's first year to about his fifth year does he feel close to his father; the time then [gradually] comes when he can no longer play next to his father or trail along with him on visits, *but must respectfully stay away from him* and speak [carefully] and softly to him. At about this same time the child's behavior in general seems to undergo a change; once spontaneous and laughing, *he now adopts the [submissive], restrained, formal controlled [behavior] of his elders. The two events are somehow related.*<sup>8</sup>

### Common Elements: Parental Attitudes

There are marked differences between these two cases; yet, despite the lack of historical or cultural connection between Burma and Java, whose peoples came from different areas and one of which is Buddhist, the other Muslim, the underlying similarities are impressive.<sup>9</sup> In the view of adults in both societies, an infant is irresponsible and incapable, without power to resist or manage either his own impulses or any outside force; and he is also emotionally delicate, in constant danger of harm. Consequently, he is cared for rather anxiously, and above all is prevented from crying. When he is at an age at which threats may keep him from crying, threats are as satisfactory as accomplishing the same end by indulgence. He is not an independent human being to be respected, but a mechanism or toy. His mother, who bore the burden of creating him, cherishes him; his father's attitude is little more than taking pleasure in him.

Then after babyhood, another aspect of the same view, the child is seen as having no inner resources for self-development. And so his training does not consist of providing an environment in which he can develop, and in aiding his development; it consists of protecting, restraining, controlling, directing, as if he were clay or a sponge or capable only of imitating.

<sup>8</sup> "Vocabulary," pp. 231-32.

<sup>9</sup> The Burmese came to Burma from Central Asia and in Burma were surrounded only by land. The Javanese came from somewhere by sea. There seems to have been no people who might have created a cultural connection between the two.

### **Common Effects on Personality: Self-Doubt; Respect**

In neither society, therefore, does the child receive enough or long-enough continued cherishing care to relieve his anxieties. The apparent indulgence in infancy is not necessarily responsible to his needs. Of course the infant in both cultures senses some love and cherishing, but in both cultures very soon after babyhood he must often see the powerful persons around him as simply not responsible to his urges or initiative. Then, often in response to the intrusion of his initiative on them, they cause him pain. The reaction of his environment to his actions is bewildering and beyond his comprehension. Or perhaps it is more accurate to see that he sees the world as a place in which events are determined by the wills of the powerful, and in which one finds security by submitting unless one is in a situation of power and can command. Thus the individual avoids situations in which he explores his relationships with other persons as equals, that is, in which he attacks problems of human relations. Instead of taking any such initiative he accepts the established order of authority. He is inferior and submits, or he is superior and directs.

Related to this effect on personality is the effect of another element common to the Burmese and Javanese cultures, a concept introduced from childhood as one the child must learn if he is to behave properly as an adult. Expressed most simply, it is that respect, that is, the proper conduct of personal relationships, is not an attitude toward a man's achievement, his moral or intellectual qualities, or an opinion he has expressed. It is a reaction to his position in life. It is the proper inner attitude in the presence of superior social rank. It is not accorded to the individual himself but to his status.

Deeply implanted not only as an outward observance of what is proper but also as an inner observance and sensation, this concept does not so much imply reserve or modesty as it does fear or shame, and perhaps anxiety. It prevents thinking about personal relationships. It suppresses any free expression or exercise of initiative in the individual's dealing with the human world around him.

### **The Handling of Rage**

In both cultures the child must react with rage to the anxiety and

terror repeatedly created in him during infancy and early childhood. Such rage must be diverted somewhere if the society is to be stable. In both societies it is directed against juniors, but other outlets are also found necessary.

The Javanese give release to their rage by displaying it against outsiders, justifying such action by giving it religious approval. Their Muslim religion not only strengthens authoritarianism within the society but also permits aggression against outsiders because they include all unbelievers.

The rage created in the individual by the frustrations of Burmese childhood is so great that it seems necessary to permit the child to release it against anyone outside the family. This solves the immediate problem, but it leaves such a slender margin of self-control the Burmese man apparently continually or repeatedly feels a danger that he may lose control of himself and attack anyone around him.

Against this aggressiveness which unconsciously he fears in himself a Burmese erects defenses of various kinds. One of these is to assume a bland, mild, friendly form of behavior. This, I suggest, is an attitude the Burmese individual adopts as a part of the process of repressing his dangerous rage. Another defense is the stern prohibition in the culture against asking for things for oneself. This prohibition is so strong that even Burmans living in complete poverty do not beg. Extreme deference to elders is another defense. It extends to all persons in authority. One of the strongest defenses is adherence to Buddhism, which preaches that peace lies only in abandoning all desires, all lust, all aggression; only he who wants nothing can have peace. This prohibition justifies the individual's resistance to his aggressive impulses and his anxiety at attempting to explore the problems of the physical world.

### THE STABILITY OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

It is clear from the accounts above that childhood environments in Burma and Java are as they are, not by some cultural accident unique to those societies but because adults in those societies are authoritarian. Wherever we find authoritarian personality in adults, we may expect that childhood environment and its effects

on personality are fundamentally as they are in Java and Burma.

Although parental personalities are centrally important, other factors in childhood environment also affect childhood personality. I suggest that those other factors consist of a physical world seen as dominating human fortunes and a hierarchical social structure that accommodates authoritarian personality and no other. Helplessness in the face of forces of the physical world provides the basis for the traditional concept of the nature of the world; and as the growing individual emerges from his home into the larger community, its social structure fits perfectly his expectation of authoritarian relationships. Thus everything fits; and, in all traditional societies, unless there are powerful disturbing forces, we may expect authoritarian personality and with it authoritarian social structure and the traditional image of the nature of the world to persist generation after generation. From the viewpoint of social theory it is this persistence, accompanied by circumstances that are likely to prevent variation from the authoritarian pattern that are the most important characteristics of traditional societies.

The stability of this system over time might be broken if there were some slow, growing change in the social structure or a steady increase in the understanding of nature that resulted in a new view of the physical world. However, the tendency toward such slow change is slight for several reasons.

As we have seen, the members of a traditional society typically fear their urges to resist or rebel, and so they drive impulses to create or to change things deep into their unconscious, where they are inaccessible. The result is that they have very little "capacity to be surprised," very little "openness to experience," and they lack creative imagination with which to make the most of any unexpected phenomena which might come to their notice. Also, both their need to submit and their need in adult life to dominate are satisfied by their status in the authoritarian social system. Thus they have no motive to look for paths to technical or social change.

In addition, some of these personality characteristics constitute positive resistances to change. The members of traditional society are barred from looking at either nature or the social structure with a fresh view because if they might find a problem to be



explored, and the anxiety that any unresolved situation creates in them restrains them. The individual is shamed if he fails in the observance of the long-established customary personal relationships, if for example, he subjects his community to difficulty by not fulfilling his share in the customary exchange of services, or to danger by failing to respect the rituals and the submissiveness due the spiritual powers.

Among the elite there is also the strong urge to preserve an identity different from that of peasants and laborers. Lowering oneself by participating in manual-technical labor or exhibiting interest in the physical world or in business threatens the entire group by weakening the symbols of difference between them and the simple folk. Thus there is antagonism in some degree to the activities of the individual who steps outside the bounds of conventional behavior. Not only does the disapproval of others exert pressure on him, but he exerts pressure on himself because the attitude of his society are also built into his own personality. If by some chance he faces and becomes aware of a new situation which from the viewpoint of Western culture might be regarded as promising, a sense of unease at his un-elite behavior must prevent him from observing its significance and compel him to follow customary behavior.

A few examples will illustrate how the pressure of his social group and the pressure in the individual himself against any action that might violate custom or change his accepted position in the social order work against the possibility of technological change.

If the textile craftsman in a town installs an engine and mechanized looms to increase his production, he must dare to step up from his accepted status, because he must organize workers, supplies, and a market beyond the scope of his customary activity. All of this means daringly assuming authority not in accordance with his accepted rank. He may be looked upon as attempting to gain equality with members of an elite group above him. In addition, his new and increased activities may force him to neglect family duties and obligations to the community. These are risks that restrain him far more than the risk of failure of his enterprise.

We know from our examination of the attitude of the elite toward any association with manual labor that if a member of

the elite were to establish such a textile enterprise he would be lowering himself. The humiliation and sense of discomfort which would be involved will probably keep the thought that he might benefit materially from such activity from ever entering his mind.

As for the introduction of larger-scale industry, traditional peasant society sees that as an activity of foreigners and remote from the power or understanding of members of the local elite as well as the simple folk. One's government may introduce such symbols of power, and an individual official may be assigned the honor of being manager of the enterprise. But to expect that he will lower himself or can exert himself against problems so that he will execute with effectiveness the practical and complex tasks of operating the enterprise is asking him to shed his personality structure and become a different man.

There will always be some few individuals who differ from the typical members of their society. The individual who is different because he cannot assume his customary duties as father or his proper place in the social order can become a priest, monk, village fool, or learned man. In the traditional society such an individual is accepted as serving the society and therefore causes no strain on its structure. But the differing individual whose intelligence is such that new ideas are attractive to him despite all pressures against acting on them, and who explores new possibilities so that he may avail himself of them, is an isolated individual in a traditional community. The social pressures are certainly likely to create tensions in him which lessen his attentions to his children and are likely to cause authoritarian personality to reappear in them. Also, his children will observe the tensions in his behavior and reject those characteristics of his personality which cause the difficulty.

I suggest that these pressures, more than the difficulty of scientific advance in some objective sense, account for the extreme slowness of development of scientific concepts and accumulation of knowledge of the physical world.

These facts do not, however, prove that basic change can never occur in traditional society. We know that it has occurred on a number of occasions. What the argument above, if it is acceptable, does demonstrate is that we must look for a force or forces of considerable power if we are to have a satisfactory explanation

of the occasional historical disruptions of traditional society.

In conclusion, it may be well to repeat that no society is perfectly traditional and stable. It is almost certainly true that in every traditional society the members of some group or groups are somewhat dissatisfied with their roles, and seeds of change exist which would eventually disrupt the traditional structure, personality and culture, even though no force for change influenced the society from without. The sketch drawn here of a completely traditional society is useful because it portrays basic elements and relationships present in every traditional society and thus the nature of the forces resisting change. Thereby it lays a basis for discussion of the sorts of forces that may introduce change.

DISTURBING EVENTS  
AND REACTIONS TO THEM

SINCE the traditional society has great stability and resists change, the forces that disrupt it must be powerful. What forces, then, can cause the emergence in a traditional society of a group that abandons customary ways and turns its energies to the tasks of technological advance—that is, to disruptive social change? It is a principal theme of this study that such a group emerges when the members of some social group experience what I shall call *the withdrawal of status respect*.

We have noted the importance of status, the sense of one's proper and accepted place in an established social order, in the personality of the individual in the traditional society. One's status involves not only his economic position, whether he is peasant or lord, but also all that he does and believes, all of his relationships to other persons and to the unseen forces in which one believes. One's status is one's identity; it includes one's purposes and values in life. Thus the satisfaction derived by an individual from his activity in life depends in part on the status associated with it. That status shall be satisfying requires not that it is high but merely that it is deemed appropriate by the person occupying it and is respected by others.

The respect of others is of vital importance. For the inner satisfaction of the members of a society, and for social stability, it is essential that the status of the members of each group in a society also be recognized by the other groups, especially by the groups whose opinion one values, as appropriate and good. A person cannot find satisfaction in his adult pattern of behavior, including his beliefs, if he does not also feel that the groups whose opinion he values approve of such behavior. If the members of a group, having learned a role and status in infancy and childhood and having learned also to value the opinion and respect of certain other groups, find that those other groups do not respect their status, that lack or withdrawal



of respect has far-reaching effects. For the value one sets on his status and the value he sets on the opinion of other groups are inseparable elements of his personality, his identity as an individual. When it is impossible for him to believe at the same time that his status is worthy and that the judgment of others can be trusted, the result is inner conflict and tensions in the individual.

It should be noted that this does not occur because the individual merely feels that he is regarded as inferior. The peasant, for example, regards himself as inferior in social status to the lord without feeling frustrated or humiliated by his status. But it does occur, and he does feel humiliated and mistreated, if his function as a peasant or worker, which he has been led to believe is a useful and worthy element in the functioning of the society, is no longer accorded due respect. This is the situation we call the withdrawal of status respect. It is one of withdrawal from a group of respect for a status which it has previously had in a society, which has been accepted, and which the group regards as a worthy part of a reasonable order of things. It is withdrawal of respect for one's purposes and values in life.

Whenever withdrawal of status respect appears in a society, it loosens the ties between groups that hold the society together. It will be suggested in the following chapter that groups who feel that classes above them no longer have decent regard for the groups' purposes in life will lose their contentment with the traditional society. In their children and grandchildren personality changes will be bred that contain the seeds of social change—seeds that may push through the toughest crust of social controls and set the society on new courses.

Indeed, withdrawal of status respect is at the root of the world's agitation today. The elites of traditional societies respected the positions and functions of the groups below them. Today, however, in many economically underdeveloped areas of the world the elites are self-centered groups who look haughtily and with contempt on the classes below them. The resulting feeling by the lower classes that their superiors have no interest in or regard for the purposes or values of those lower classes is the basic disruptive force in these societies.

## **Withdrawal of Status Respect: Effect on Personality Development**

Withdrawal of status respect may occur when a traditional elite group is displaced by force from its previous status by another traditional group, or when any superior group changes its attitude toward a subordinate group. It may occur when members of a merchant group, in a time of expanding trade, become large-scale traders with great economic power but are denied the social status that traditionally belonged to groups with such power because the elite feel that their own status is threatened. Or, a group may migrate to a new society that considers its ways alien and refuses to recognize what the group considers its rightful status.

Whatever the cause, withdrawal of status respect causes conflict within the individuals subject to it. I shall suggest that the anxiety and rage thus created in adults will alter the home environment in ways that will in turn affect the personalities of the next generation, and that these effects, in one generation or increasingly over several generations, are of great importance for the theory of social change.

The first effect seems to be the appearance after one or more generations of a type of personality which I shall call "retreatist;" or, if the social tensions are more severe, a type which I shall call "ritualist." Out of ritualism, in turn, retreatism may develop. Later, retreatist personality may give way to innovational personality, in some cases to a special type of innovational personality to be called "reformist."

As a basis for analyzing the effects, it will be useful first to define these personality types: retreatist, ritualist, innovational, reformist.

### **Retreatist**

The retreatist is the person who during the process of personality formation has met the problem of being unable to satisfy conflicting values by repressing them from his consciousness without being able to replace them by others. He continues to function within the society, but without much interest either concerning his work activity or in the attainment of position. He has only suppressed within himself the accepted values of the society

and of his group in it, not eliminated them. If he had eliminated them or created new values for himself, he could successfully order and direct his own life, but this he cannot do. He may be indifferent and withdrawn, or a drunkard; a "bum," or a "hippie."

### **Ritualist**

The ritualist meets the conflict of values that threatens his identity by a kind of defensive behavior. He acts in the ways accepted and approved in his society, but he does so without any real hope that his actions will enable him to attain accepted goals. Thus he is only going through the motions of what is expected of him. He is neat, methodical and dependable, but he acts without initiative, imagination or vigor.

### **Innovational**

The innovational individual, because he is not satisfied by the customary activities of a person in his position in his society, seeks a satisfactory identity by activity contrary to the values of the society. In doing so he is seeking the acceptance by his society of new goals, new values; in some degree he is seeking to change the existing society. In a sense, then, he is also rebelling against it. However, he can satisfy his need for a satisfactory identity without trying to impose his values on others.

### **Reformist**

The reformist is also an innovator seeking change but one who cannot satisfy his needs without imposing his values on his fellows. He acts openly and directly to change the accepted ways of his society. He may be rebellious and attempt to establish a new society.

These, then, are possible modes of adaptation by the individual to conflict within him caused by contradictory demands of his culture. The classification seems to be exhaustive; any possible reaction lies within one or another of these classes. We shall use these names in discussing the effects of withdrawal of status respect in succeeding chapters.

## APPEARANCE OF RETREATISM

In this chapter and later I shall suggest that when authoritarian parents suffer the withdrawal of status respect, they will create a home life that encourages retreatism. Moreover, retreatism will increase over a period of several generations. Still later, as a result of this process of personality change, creative personality is likely to appear.

In suggesting this order of change in personality I am speculating. I am offering a model, or theory, that goes beyond the available facts. Although there is much room for error, this theory seems to explain the facts of social change and of human personality better than do other hypotheses or suppositions.

### THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF WITHDRAWAL OF STATUS RESPECT

In considering the effects of withdrawal of status respect it is useful to distinguish between those on behavior and those on personality.

The most immediate effect on the behavior of individuals will be resentment, or some stronger form of rage and anxiety. If the withdrawal consists of the assumption of power by a group which violates old values, the group or groups that have lost status respect will attempt to throw off the aggressors if they have sufficient power to make the attempt and it seems right to do so. This is the reaction to aggression from outside the society, and the people of probably every colonial area attempted to expel the foreign invaders by force when they first appeared.

When the withdrawal of status respect is by a group within the society, there may also be resistance by force. But if that group cannot be challenged, those who have lost status respect and are thereby humiliated may attempt to ignore the withdrawal. Or they will endure the withdrawal of status respect and continue to function while observing old and valued rules of behavior where possible, paying inward tribute to them if outward



observance is barred. Individuals continue to live or at least to believe according to the values they have learned, feeling continuing anxiety and rage and probably also some self-pity, hoping that the troubles will end and that the good old days in which they had their rightful place will return.

These new types of action in response to a new situation are changes in behavior but not in personality. Personality has changed only if one behaves differently from the way one would previously have behaved in the same situation.

The personalities of adults subjected to withdrawal of status respect will certainly change somewhat also. However, in adults the changes in personality will hardly be far-reaching since, by the time of adulthood, personality traits are too firmly established to be changed except by the most forceful events. Therefore the major effects of withdrawal of status respect on personality will be the effect on young children of altered behavior in the home by adults who are denied the status they expect life to accord them.

It should not be supposed that human behavior will be seriously affected, and a process of personality change begun by a minor or only temporary withdrawal of status respect. But we may reasonably suppose that continued ill regard for the way of life in which one finds satisfactory identity, or continued interference in some important aspect of it, if severe and if by groups whose good regard one values and expects, will have more serious effects. It is this kind of action over a long period of time that is meant here by the term "withdrawal of status respect."

The ways and degree to which adult behavior in the home will be altered depend on the severity of the withdrawal of status respect. It is convenient to divide the various cases into two types. The first is withdrawal by an elite group within the society that is an accepted and respected part of the social structure. The other is conquest and social disruption by an external group that does not share the society's culture and that therefore has little claim to respect or prestige in the society except for its power. In the first case, because the elite group shares the society's culture, its violation of old values is likely to be limited. In the second case, because the conquering group is alien, its system of values

differs from that of the society and by its very pattern of life it will indicate contempt, distaste, or at least a low valuation for many of the characteristics of the society.

These two types of withdrawal of status respect are of course not fundamentally different in quality. Yet the differences between a group that traditionally has been accepted and a group whose behavior is almost wholly distasteful are so great that it is useful to treat them as differing types. The first will be considered in this chapter, the second in the discussion of colonialism.

### THE EFFECT IN THE HOME OF WITHDRAWAL OF STATUS RESPECT

We have seen that in an authoritarian society the individual's identity, his sense of what he is and his place in the society, is fully satisfying to him only if he has a satisfactory relation to the nobility or land-owning upper classes. He regards himself as inferior to them, but if he knows that they look upon his function as a proper and good element in the social system his life is likely to be satisfying to him.

When the upper class does not support his position as a useful element but instead shows that it does not have respect for the social role of the individual, when it ridicules some aspect of his role or forbids him to do some of the things that give him peace and security, the individual experiences anxiety. His traditional occupation no longer gives him the satisfaction it formerly did, because now it is not sufficiently valued by those whose respect he feels he must have. Groups whose opinions he has learned to respect no longer respect his values (because if they did they would not act in ways that violate them) and no longer look on his role in life as entirely worthy.

For peace of mind he must feel that his position in the social structure is worthy, and he must also accept the attitudes of the superior groups. But now he cannot do both.

He will ask himself whether the superior groups deserve the respect he has paid them. He will criticize their actions, since these violate his values. And he will wonder whether his own old way of life is as good as it was, since it no longer serves

the purpose of commanding social respect. But by his old values, his way of life is good, and by other of his values, the other social groups are worthy of respect.

These inner conflicts will cause him anxiety and frustration. And anxiety and frustration cause irritation and rage. He cannot release his rage freely on the individuals who have withdrawn their respect, both because they are too powerful and because he has always thought of them as superiors to whom he learned in his childhood to defer. In a peasant society, or virtually any society, the objects on which he is permitted to release his irritation will include his children, provided that he keeps the manner of expression of his rage within acceptable bounds. More than before, he will be irritated at their play or their chatter and insist that they avoid being nuisances to him. What is contemplated here is the persistence of such action, in some degree, over a long period in traditional society. In a traditional society the father will also be more authoritarian toward his wife, and she will be even more heedful of his moods than before and will suppress the children more.

This change in home environment, I suggest, is a decisive effect of withdrawal of status respect. One may expect that children experiencing this changed childhood environment will come out of it with personalities different from those of their predecessors. Consider first the effect of the fact that the father's values have come into conflict with each other.

### THE WEARING AWAY OF VALUES

We have seen that the child can form conclusions from what he observes around him. Thus the son will shape opinions from his father's behavior concerning the nature of the world in which the son and the father live. From his father's attitudes toward his work and the daily round of life and toward other persons in his society the son will see that it is of great importance to his father to believe in the goodness of his occupation and class position and in the goodness of the attitudes of superior social groups. And he will perceive that his father's anxiety results from the fact that he can no longer believe in both of these ideas at the same time. Of course, to a young child the meaning of

occupation and class position will be a limited one, as will the importance of the attitudes of other social groups; but his emotional reaction to them may be expected to be strong.

The father is helpless. He values both things; he cannot change his values. But the son's values are not yet formed; and an important part of his perception is that the situation causes his father to feel pain. So, while the son values his father's traditional position, he expects pain to result from it. He values the respect of the superior groups, but he expects them to deny that respect and cause him pain. The solution to this conflict is to deny that either is important. The more intensely the boy values his father's traditional social role, the more he will be pained. The more he cares about the opinion of the superior group, the more he will be pained. But if he can only deny that these things are important, deny that he has any great expectation for the satisfaction or contentment in life, then he can avoid pain. If he does not expect too much, he cannot be wounded by failure to achieve much. Thus the boy will repress his zeal for life. By doing that, he is safe.

As he emerges from his home farther and farther into the larger community, he will find that the facts of the outer world verify what he perceived earlier in his father's behavior. He will find that the behavior he learned earlier to meet the problems of conflicting values fits the larger scene, and that the best solution is not to expect too great satisfaction from his position in the society and not to hope too strongly for social acceptance.

The case we are considering is one in which an entire social group, rather than a single individual, has this experience. Each boy will then find his attitude strengthened by the attitudes of his fellows, and a "youth culture" different from that of the older generation will probably appear, confirming the change in personality.

One need not expect a violent change in values in one generation, but one may expect more and more change over a number of generations. In the first generation of withdrawal of status respect, the son perceived in his father a clear belief in the goodness of the traditional social position, and he perceived his father's pain and anxiety. The son's son, together with the expectation of pain, will see in his father's personality something that was



absent from his grandfather's, the suggestion that the road to safety lies in repressing one's values. It seems likely that this will be a convincing part of the model his father provides, and that the desire to avoid pain will move him farther along that road than his father traveled. And his son still farther. Thus over several generations, if the withdrawal of status respect continues, the safety of not hoping for satisfaction in any role is likely to become more and more appealing and indifference, the tendency toward retreatism, to increase.

### FURTHER COMMENTS

In analyzing the effects of withdrawal of status respect I have discussed only the sons of each generation. It should be noted that the father's new moods increase the mother's need to serve and help him. That is, they intensify her traditional behavior. Thus, women are not likely to become as retreatist as men.

This discussion of the way in which retreatism occurs helps us to understand the nature of retreatism. Needs and values still exist even in fully retreatist personality. But they are conflicted, and the need to repress conflict within one requires a continuing great expenditure of energy. Little energy is left for action. The retreatist individual is indifferent not merely because he does not think it worthwhile or safe to exert energy toward any goal but also because he has little surplus energy to exert.

The retreatist person is not free of resentment or rage at the circumstances or groups that have caused his condition. His rage is intense. But because he fears its violence, he denies that it exists and holds it in check. In some circumstances it will burst forth with shocking violence. One such case is individuals "running amok," or acting in a frenzy. Another is colonial uprisings. When people realize they can revolt, take their destinies in their own hands, and throw out the masters who have violated their culture, the violence of their reaction may be such that it startles those who have thought of them as indifferent creatures.

EMERGENCE OF TECHNOLOGICAL  
CREATIVITY

RETREATISM is not the end of the road. As retreatism deepens in successive generations, it creates circumstances of home life and the community environment which encourage the development of innovational personality—the appearance of people who introduce new ideas. The turnaround from increasing retreatism toward creativity presumably occurs because of progressive changes in the personality of the fathers and mothers of succeeding generations.

The individual who, growing up under withdrawal of status respect, and who no longer feels that the traditional hierarchy, or social group is good, is likely to be somewhat tense, anxious and irritable. When he is an adult and a parent he is likely to release in the home the rage resulting from his frustration at the community's refusal to grant him the regard he expects. He may be assertive and tyrannical, or react with annoyance to being opposed. If the world refuses him adequate respect, at least he can control his wife or his children. By this anxiety, irritation and lack of self-assurance, he conveys to the next generation increased doubt about the possibility of attaining happiness.

The father of a generation or two later may therefore be changeable: sometimes asserting his dominance, sometimes sympathetic, sometimes self-pitying. At other times he may withdraw irresponsibly from the struggle and absent himself from the home, drink with his close companions or perhaps assert his manhood and relieve his anxiety by mastering some woman other than his wife. Some such fathers may simply be weak—completely retreatist.

A son who observes his father's anxieties may carry into adulthood a self-conscious unhappiness concerning his role in life, and on becoming a father, he may convey to *his* son a sense that he regrets the son's role as well as his own. Or, pitying himself, the father may rule his son harshly, or may drive his son unreasonably, seeking through the standards of performance he

demands of his son to relieve his own sense of failure.

Various possible types of parental behavior may thus develop. Four of them will be considered.

1. The weak father, who has stopped trying and provides little leadership or control in the home.

2. The father, still dominating in the traditional manner, but unsure of his position in society, and carrying within himself a sense of failure, who compensates for it by insisting that his sons shall achieve great distinction. He is likely to put great pressure on them beginning in infancy, but he may also give them a sense that he values and loves them. Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States from 1912-1916, had a father who lived while the traditional life of the "Old South" in the United States disintegrated. He was a man such as I have described. The son may feel great pressure all his life to achieve what his father expects.

3. The harsher father, who also compensates for his sense of failure by demanding achievement from his son, but gives the son a less clear sense of being loved. Consequently, the son feels that he must escape from this arbitrary authority as well as feeling that he must achieve. Martin Luther, a 16th century German religious revolutionary, had this type of father—a transitional individual who lived during a period of stress and change in medieval Germany.

4. The father who compensates for his sense of not being respected in his society by ruling his home like a tyrant. If his tyranny is consistent, the spirit of his sons is likely to be crushed. But if he is changeable, or at home only part of the time, his sons may develop enough skill to avoid him, and grow to have an intense feeling of the wrongness of unreasonable power. Such sons often become conspirators against governments they feel are dictatorial. Cuban Fidel Castro's father was apparently such a man.

In all four of these situations the mother is likely to be warmer and more nurturant, or cherishing, than the father. This is because withdrawal of status respect affects women less severely than men, since the role of woman is more in the home and less in the community than that of men.

Each of these four situations will be considered briefly.

## INNOVATION AS A RESULT OF RETREATISM

If the father is changeable or weak, the mother may hold her son strongly to her as a replacement for her husband, and may dominate the son. But, if she feels humiliation at the weakness of her husband (and her father), she may rejoice whenever her son shows any initiative. Her joy will reward him, and he may "try his wings" increasingly. This sort of care encourages the development early in life of initiative and self-reliance. The sense of security and of being valued which will give a child boldness to explore the world are present, and so also are pressure to achieve and reward for doing so.

If the father is sometimes irritable and self-assertive, the son may constantly be somewhat anxious about the results of using his own judgment and asserting himself. But he may also feel that the best hope of gaining the satisfaction he seeks is by achieving, not by avoiding the test. His anxiety forces him to test continually and forever whether he can succeed.

Although the fully retreatist father may provide only slight interference to the mother's nurturance of her son, he likewise fails to provide one of the elements necessary for the formation of innovational personality, an attractive model of at least a moderately resourceful and successful behavior. In many instances the masculine qualities woven into the mother's personality may provide the model, because, if her father was weak, she may be strong and achieving in order to compensate. By good chance, some male relative may provide a model. In other cases, the model may not exist in the flesh, but the mother may provide it in her recollections of the achievements and personalities of father or grandfather or uncle in happier times.

That such circumstances in the home are encouraging to the emergence of innovational personality is indicated by sketches of typical successful American businessmen. Warner and Abegglen, in their book, *Big Business Leaders in America*, cite childhood recollections of a number of men they studied who had achieved business success from humble beginnings.

One man remembered that his father used to like to drink, and spent little time at home. He could not remember his father ever doing anything for the family. His mother had to work.



She took laundry to do in their home and the children were still delivering it until after they were married. His mother was always even-tempered, hard-working. She made a good home with what she had to do with. She was always serious but she was a good mother. The son was afraid of his father, and so was his mother. He never saw his father comb his hair or tie his shoelace; his mother did it for him. Of course the children didn't see their father much as he just wasn't around.<sup>1</sup>

Another said in substance: My father was carefree in one way. He had a wonderful sense of humor although he was very strict. My parents were divorced when I was about sixteen years old. I never was companionable with my father. He was too strict and stubborn. I just couldn't agree with him. I didn't see him very much when he was at home. I avoided him most of the time. My mother was a forceful woman. Full of vitality and never satisfied. She had plenty of energy. I always went to her for advice, and she wanted me to be successful. She was always in favor of my doing whatever would help me to succeed. I generally took advice from my mother.<sup>2</sup>

A few of the authors' summary comments will indicate how closely the conclusions they drew parallel those sketched here.

Generally the focus of energy on mobility derives from the mothers. . . . The fathers seem in most cases to have been distant from the sons, and not at all supporting or [strengthening]. The father is an unreliable figure. At the same time, there is this feeling of loss and deprivation.

Certainly the nature of the mother is important, for apparently it is through her that these men learn to strive, to work hard today for rewards that may possibly be forthcoming at some future time, and deeply believe in this. Also, and unlike the typical history of [poor social adjustment], these men seem to have during their adolescent years positive experiences with male figures, and to have experiences that [strengthen] the training and life-view implanted by the mother.

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<sup>1</sup> W. Lloyd Warner and James C. Abegglen, *Big Business Leaders in America* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1955), p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> The same book, p. 77.

Another element of central importance is the experience of some father-figure who gave them encouragement and aid, and thereby [lessened] their hostility toward males by fulfilling some of the functions they feel their fathers have neglected. These men seem most often to have been teachers.<sup>3</sup>

For the reasons summarized at the beginning of this chapter, it is highly probable that circumstances of this general sort appear when withdrawal of status respect disrupts traditional society. These conditions will not necessarily appear in every family subjected to withdrawal of status respect for a number of generations. With respect to any single family chosen by chance, one would be unwise to predict that innovational individuals would appear. But in any large number of families one would expect that favorable circumstances would appear in many. Withdrawal of status respect creates forces which, speaking in general terms, move the personalities of a group steadily down a slope of retreatism. However, that movement itself creates opposing forces which, gathering strength as the flow proceeds, may disturb, interrupt and divert it, until finally a current of innovational personalities emerges which is sufficient to turn the social flow in a new direction.

## THE REFORMER: TWO VARIANTS

The influence of the stern and demanding but loving father and that of the harsh and demanding father who creates little perception of love have one element in common: each may induce in a son a personality type that may cause him to be known as a reformer. But apart from the reforming zeal the sons of the two men will differ, and the nature of their reforming efforts will differ. The two cases must be considered separately.

### **The Stern, Demanding, Loving Father**

The father's need to have the son achieve what the father could not achieve may be so compelling that he insists on performance

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<sup>3</sup> These three quotations are respectively from the book cited, pp. 78, 77-78, 78 and 79.

before the child is physically and mentally ready to perform. If he does, he will create in the son both a perception that attempts to achieve bring failure and a fear of trying. But he need not have such an effect. Even though he is demanding, he may have the traditional notion that the proper time for training to begin is the age of five or six, and until that age the son may feel less pressure.

When the father does assert his demands for achievement, the effect is quite different from that of authoritarianism. The authoritarian father insists mainly that his son be obedient. He thus indicates little expectation that his son can achieve or can bear responsibility. The loving father we are discussing sets difficult standards of achievement. By doing so he indicates a deep conviction that his son can achieve, that the son is responsible for his own success in life. Even if the son feels rage at his father's arbitrary, or unreasonable, demands of him, he also gains a perception of warmth, or, if not of warmth, at least of being felt of high worth; because only from a worthy individual would so much be expected.

The father's requirements are difficult to meet, and so the son will feel persistent anxiety. He will also feel rage at his father's arbitrariness. Yet the father's high valuation of him suggests to the son that the father would not make impossible requests of him, and therefore that he, not his father, must be at fault if he cannot achieve as expected. And yet perhaps he is not at fault either, because would his father have expected so much from him if he were not capable of achievement? His anxiety forever drives him to seek some explanation. The most satisfactory explanation is that there is some fault in the world around him that prevents success. If that conviction is bred deeply into him, he may spend his life trying to relieve his anxiety by remedying one imperfection, and then another and another, in the world around him. He will try to do it by using some talent which he found when he was a boy that he could use successfully. If in fact there are problems in his country at the time, and if his country happens to need his type of talent, he may become a great reformer.

The set of circumstances that produces such a man may appear in any society, not merely in a traditional one. The United States

provides a remarkable example: Woodrow Wilson, who as a baby was named Thomas Woodrow Wilson. Brief reference to some of the circumstances of his life will illustrate some of the relationships between a person's childhood and his adult career.

Wilson's father was minister of a Presbyterian church and professor of speech in a college of religion. He spoke in polished phrases without saying much. He played with his son, discussed adult affairs with him, and in other ways showed his love and high regard for him. But he also made harsh and unreasonable demands for achievement by Thomas, often requiring him to re-write a composition several times. He was cruelly taunting about failure in any detail.

There is no record of any expression of resentment by Thomas, although perhaps he was unconsciously defying his father when, at the age of 25, he abandoned the given name which his father had selected for him and adopted the use of his second name, his mother's family name, Woodrow.

His father's excessive demands and high expectations, and the feeling that he should be able to meet them, seem to have created great strain within Wilson. Until he was 40, he made no important decision without first obtaining his father's consent. During his youth and also as a man, he experienced repeated periods of depression. Every few years he also experienced periods of exhaustion which disabled him for a time and might be described as nervous breakdowns.

How could he solve the problem of his life, his failure to attain the perfection of accomplishment which his father expected of him, and which his father's love had persuaded him could not be unreasonable? I think it reasonable to assume that early in life he decided (unconsciously) that the difficulty must be that if the world were reorganized (the little world of his boyhood, the greater world of his manhood), then he could attain the goal expected, and relieve his anxiety. In any event, he spent his life, as a boy and a man, reorganizing things, and accomplishing the reorganization through his eloquence. As a boy in school, he became president of a baseball club (even though he himself was not athletic) and persuaded it to adopt a constitution which he formulated. In college, he left a debating society to organize a new one; in law school he became president of the debating



society and persuaded it to adopt a revised constitution; as a graduate student in political science he persuaded a literary society to do the same; as a college teacher he reorganized the college debating society in the same manner.

Later, as President of the United States, he proposed a League of Nations, a constitution for the world. When he did so, he was not merely attacking a problem the world faced. He was also satisfying a personal need to reorganize the world around him, a need he had been manifesting all his life.

Probably every man who accomplishes something as an adult is, like Woodrow Wilson, following a pattern which he found satisfying in his boyhood.

### **The Demanding Tyrant**

If the father who feels guilty at his lack of success and expects his son to achieve what he could not is more resentful, aggressive and harsh, and conveys little perception that he loves or values his son, he will produce a different result from the stern, loving father. To a demanding tyrant father the son is primarily an instrument to fulfill his father's desires, and the son will perceive this. As a consequence, he will feel less guilt at his inability or refusal to meet his father's demands. Rather, he may grow to feel a need to challenge arbitrary and selfish authority. The fateful decision is most likely to be taken in late adolescence or early adulthood, when he can no longer postpone the question of what his identity shall be in the adult world he is entering. He is likely to have an unfavorable reaction to arbitrary power anywhere, so that he will feel a personal need to challenge it wherever he finds it. The student rebels of 1968 are like this, and it is entirely possible that their personal need to challenge authority had its roots in their infancy and early childhood, because they were children immediately after World War Two, and many parents were unusually tense and anxious and pre-occupied with their own problems at that time.

If such an individual's sense of the presence of dangerous power causes no sympathetic response in his fellows—if they do not share his sense of danger—then he will be regarded as strange and will be suppressed or merely tolerated. But if there is arbitrary power in his society which is perceived as a threat by

his fellow men, so that what he says and does satisfies their inner needs as well, and if his ability and the intensity of his need are great, then he may become a leader in social revolution and like the less violent reformer sketched above, may become an historic figure.

Such an individual, who sees a threat in any power outside himself, will feel security only if he himself is exercising supreme power over others. Having overthrown tyranny, he is likely to become a tyrant himself.

The more firmly a harsh and repressive ruler is installed in power in a country, and the more violent and conspiratorial the effort which is needed to overthrow him, the more likely it is that the revolution will not succeed until someone with a fierce hatred of power appears to lead it—someone who had a personal problem of arbitrary power in extreme form in his own childhood, and who feels safe only when he himself has unchallenged authority. This is why a man who is a revolutionary in the name of democracy and liberty is likely to act as a tyrant when he has attained power; why the Russian Bolsheviks, having overthrown Tsarist authoritarianism, established their own in the name of democracy; and why Fidel Castro, having overthrown the oppressive rule of Batista, finds it possible to govern Cuba only by being authoritarian himself.

Although a reforming or rebellious personality and social circumstances which cause a reform or revolutionary career may appear in any type of society, appearance of this type of personality seems especially likely under withdrawal of expected status in traditional society. This is because the presence in a father of an authoritarian personality which is modified in the way necessary to permit a son to see the possibility of solution of his problem by defying the authority, seems especially likely in these circumstances. The family, community, and larger social environment at this stage of societal disruption are also helpful to the perception by a son that this solution is possible, because the hierarchy of social authority is being questioned all around him.

The reformer or the rebel feels a need to change the institutions around him. The innovator, whose father was less harsh and less unreasonable, feels no such urge. This is the reason, or

one reason, why he will be an innovator rather than a reformer or a rebel.

### THE EMERGENCE OF VALUES HELPFUL TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

If the social change that occurs is to be a transition to economic growth, it is necessary that values which lead men to find economic and technological innovation interesting should appear in their personalities. These values are less likely to appear in reformers than in other innovators, because reformers are concerned with moral questions and power rather than with efficiency.

In the normal course of events, we say, a son identifies with his father. This statement, however, presents a problem. A child tries to find a satisfactory role in life. He is likely to be drawn to his father's role, if his father was happy in it, and if the son was loved and happy. In the circumstances of withdrawal of expected status, however, his father is somewhat anxious and unhappy. He still likes his occupation, but he is disturbed by the elite's lack of regard for it or for him. The son has the problem of deciding what is good in life when faced by this conflict.

Even the most self-reliant son will value what his father values, in some degree. His father is so important in his life that this is inevitable. But suppose that from his father's attitudes the boy gains three impressions: (1) that his father's role in life (as, say, a peasant, a merchant, or a small landowner; as a religious non-conformist; a villager, etc.) is good; (2) that this role, however, is not looked upon with respect by some important groups in the society, and (3) that this lack of regard makes his father uncomfortable and even somewhat uncertain about the worth of his role. Then, what conclusions will the son make?

If he is self-reliant, he may keep in mind (unconsciously) during childhood and adolescence the question: How can I avoid this problem? How can I prove my worth? In adolescence, he may observe other possible roles in life, for example, as a craftsman, a small manufacturer, a minister, or a scholar. If he observes a role that (a) seems to earn the approval of his own group, (b) requires problem-solving by which he can prove his

own ability to himself, (c) promises a more secure social status, for example by offering the possibility of increased income, and (d) is sufficiently close to some role he became familiar with during adolescence so that it seems possible, he may adopt it. If in addition (e) it is something the elite group that caused his father pain does not approve of, this may add to its attractiveness.

Obviously, many troubled boys will not find roles that meet all these standards, but some self-reliant boys will. In the modern world, technological innovation often offers all five types of satisfaction. This, I think, is the most important reason why in the modern world somewhat anxious individuals in somewhat unusual social groups often become economic innovators.

In Japan, for various unhappy groups during the 18th and 19th centuries, the requirements were perfectly met by the new industrial skills in which the countries of the Western world found the sources of their military strength. These occupations promised status greater than that of the Tokugawa, the rulers who had forbidden the Japanese knights, the *samurai*, to continue the warfare which was their source of pride; they also promised a new source of power; and they defied the Tokugawa. In Colombia, technological skill like that of groups in foreign countries served the purpose well. It was an extension of the manual-technical occupations of the Antioqueños; engaging in it defied the values of the other Colombians; and it promised economic status greater than that of the other Colombians. Indeed, it is obvious that groups in traditional societies who are at the present time rebelling against the lack of respect of elites for their purposes are likely to turn to the way of life in which foreigners (of West or East) have found prestige.

### **"Eating One's Cake and Having It," or, The Best of Both Worlds**

Following their success in economic skill, unless the old social order has been largely disrupted, the innovators are likely to turn to acquiring traditional symbols of status which their economic abundance makes possible. This is because they have not entirely rejected the general status values of their society. They have only temporarily abandoned the old values as not available to them. The economic innovators of Colombia make no attempt to



conceal their wish to own land and their desire to "keep one foot on it" when economic success in industry has made this possible. Satisfaction at land-owning status and titles of honor and nobility in England was felt by business leaders of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century and their descendants, as well as by the old aristocracy and the upper classes.

In these ways, then, innovational and reformist personalities may emerge out of retreatism. In cultural circumstances in which creative individuals see technological skill as a promising path to satisfaction of their needs, the values of the new generation will be likely to turn in this direction. Innovations in production will then appear, innovational individuals will guide institutional reforms in favorable directions, and economic growth will gain speed.

## FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

IN the preceding discussion I have emphasized change in personality as the most important cause of social change. When personality change occurs and creative individuals appear, the actions they choose to perform and find it possible to perform are influenced by external factors, that is, conditions over which they have no control. This book will not discuss the effect of such factors in detail, but some brief comments are appropriate here.

### **The State of Knowledge**

Whether or not changes in personalities in a society will lead to economic growth may depend on the state of knowledge at the time. The knowledge available to a child may also have an effect on how he looks at and understands the world and therefore may influence the formation of his personality.

The state of scientific and technical knowledge has been a very important influence on economic growth in past periods. Whether or not such knowledge was available determined whether growth would occur. Today, however, since any society has a great flow of scientific and technical knowledge available from other societies if it chooses to receive it, one may regard differences in the availability of knowledge as not a cause of differences in economic performance.

### **Markets and the Supply of Capital**

The state of the market and the amount of savings available as capital for investment are two important economic factors influencing growth.

A small market or one that is not growing may be a barrier to technological progress. An expanding market, large or small, offers a steadily increasing number of opportunities because it does not require as great innovational and creative skill for success. Thus it is a setting in which change in personality may cause continuing technological progress. An expanding market

is important also because as it grows larger it provides greater profits, and thereby, if innovation is in progress, more earnings to provide capital for the innovational process.

The volume of saving by consumers, business enterprises and the government also influences the prospects for economic growth. Technological improvements usually require the use of additional equipment for production. The greater the amount of saving that becomes available to men who are interested in obtaining and using such equipment, the greater is the possibility of technological progress. A country may be able to increase the amount of savings available for investment by receiving capital from an outside source, but the greater part must come from within the country. Many successful innovators start from very small beginnings, and expand by investing their profits. However, in every country that has so far entered upon industrialization there had previously developed a class of large traders who had accumulated a considerable amount of capital available for investment. The large traders themselves in some countries were not the industrial innovators, but they provided capital for the persons who were.

### **Change in Economic Conditions**

Although the size of markets and the amount of savings available influence the rate of growth when there are innovators to take advantage of them, change in these economic factors does not seem important as a force causing economic growth to begin. In a traditional society in which nothing else has yet occurred to change traditional personality and culture, an increase in the size of the market or in the amount of savings available is not likely to cause continuing change in technology, because a traditional elite will not be stirred to action because the market is growing nor will it use capital except in traditional ways. Thus, the force that starts economic growth and encourages new technology is not change in economic conditions but change in personality.

## **SOCIAL BLOCKAGE**

### **The General Principle**

The fact that the availability of scientific and technical know-

ledge, the size of the market, and the amount of savings at a time when creative personalities appear influence whether their creative energies will turn to technological innovation, illustrates a general principle. The creative individuals in a group from which status respect has been withdrawn will direct their creative energies into the course, or channel, of action that offers them the best opportunity to use their abilities, so they can prove their own worth and gain respect. The choice of the channel in which their energies will be directed also depends on the degree to which other possible channels are blocked.

It should not be assumed that the creative individual always consciously decides that he can accomplish his purposes in life better in one kind of endeavor than in another and chooses accordingly. More often when the individual finds one type of activity more interesting than other types, the decision is an unconscious one, perhaps made in a series of steps fairly early in life. As a child the individual chose activities that satisfied him, and in the course of formation of his personality his early choices of activities led him into his life career.

If the traditional activity of an individual's family and group satisfy him, and by following them he will keep his proper place in the society and be respected, he has no reason to seek a new way of life or change his values. He will be satisfied by directing his energies into traditional channels. But when those channels to satisfaction are blocked, as by the withdrawal of status respect or for any other reason, the individual suffers the pressure of frustration. We have already seen that such pressure and repression of energy over a number of generations creates individuals with new values and new views of the world, the kind of individuals who cause change in the society and make innovation and economic growth possible by seeking new channels for their energies.

Thus the blocking of traditional channels, what I have called here "social blockage," is an important factor influencing the creation of economic growth in a traditional society.

### **Protection by the Group**

An individual who chooses a way of life different from that of his fellows or who rejects the traditional values of his fellows



may appear in any group or class in a society. The society may tolerate his strange ways and consider him harmless. But if he rejects the traditional values, if he has new values that conflict with the traditional values, he is a threat to the traditional order of the society. Strong pressure will be exerted to make him conform. He will be excluded from the activities of social groups. The forces of disapproval will usually be too strong for such single individuals to lead traditional societies to growth and technological progress.

However, if an entire group of individuals in the society has been under the same pressures he has been under, the individual will find his values and behavior reflected in the values and behavior of many individuals around him. They will provide confirmation that his values are appropriate and good, and they will show approval for a new way of life. Although he is strange and different in the eyes of the large society, he is not strange or different in the eyes of his group. He has support and protection from his group and therefore is more likely to succeed in causing change and new ways in the society.

Thus if a group or class of some size in a traditional society has suffered withdrawal of status respect and becomes non-conforming, its members will reassure and protect each other in their new personalities. This situation greatly increases the prospect of effective innovation in technology or human relations. Wherever the transition of traditional societies to continuing technological progress has occurred, it seems to have been started or to have become noticeable only when many members of some distinctive and disfavored social group have engaged in innovational activity.

When a larger flow of innovational activity in trade and industry by members of a disfavored group occurs, it increases the prospect of similar activity by scattered individuals within the accepted elite groups. For the new wealth gained by the disfavored group threatens to rob the established groups of their monopoly of some of the symbols of their position. The established groups then feel some of the anxieties of the group from whom social acceptance and respect has been withdrawn. The sense of identity of most members of the top elites will still keep them from engaging in the new activities. However, non-

conforming individuals will find themselves more free to follow the model set by the disfavored group. Gradually it will grow to seem less non-conforming, and innovation will spread throughout the society.

## ALIENS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

I have referred to withdrawal of status respect from previously accepted groups as the force leading to personality change and gradually to innovation. It is worth noting briefly that members of alien groups, who clearly are disfavored but who have never been accepted, have not often been leaders in technological innovation. There are two reasons for this. The economic activity of such groups is usually in finance and trade, partly because such activities are distasteful to native-born individuals and therefore available for the aliens, but also because alien groups feel safer in these activities. An alien group always perceives hostility and fears attack. Since industrial activity requires the investment of resources in property such as land and buildings, which cannot be concealed, are subject to taxes, and easy to seize, an alien group is likely to center its activities in finance and trading because in these activities its wealth is in forms that can most easily be concealed. One reason for the lack of innovational leadership in technology by the members of alien groups is their fear of venturing outside this limited area of activity.

A second reason is that even if an alien group does provide leadership in technological innovation in other fields, other groups in the society will not follow its lead.

A major social change such as the transition from traditional economic behavior to widespread technological progress will not occur simply through the actions of one group that has been affected by withdrawal of status respect. If the society as a whole is to grow, the new behavior of that group must be imitated widely by individuals of other social groups. But if innovators are members of an alien minority group, who are becoming powerful because of their economic success, the other social groups will not imitate the alien group but will expel or suppress it. Because it is alien they feel free to do so. Indeed, even apart from the question of power, the fact that an alien group holds

technological activity in high value is enough to cause native-born groups to reject it in defense of their own identity. Like native-born individuals in a colonial society, they cannot accept the values of the alien group without accepting the aliens' valuation of the other groups as being unworthy. For this reason basic social change, especially a transition to economic growth, usually involves withdrawal of acceptance or respect from a group well rooted in the society.

## JAPAN: HISTORY MOCKS THE TOKUGAWA

JAPAN as the unified country we are considering here dates from 1600. Its history before that time is one of internal wars and struggles for power marked by two kinds of rule. There were times when power was centered in a single powerful chief general who, as ruler of the country took the title *shogun*. These times would be followed by wars and the dissolving of central control. The country would be divided among the local lords, who got large areas under their absolute control and ruled, each one in his own domain, as petty kings. These ruling lords were called *daimyo*. (*Daimyo* is both the singular and the plural form of the word.) Although a *shogun* or the *daimyo* actually held the power, the emperor remained as a symbolic and religious head.

It was not until the second half of the 16th century that real national unification began. By that time Japanese trade was flourishing with the Portuguese, who had come to Japan in 1543, and with Korea and China. In 1568 Oda Nobunaga, a *daimyo*, captured Kyoto, the capital city. His successor, Hideyoshi, had conquered all of Japan by 1590. After Hideyoshi's death the resulting struggle for power was won by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600, and the Tokugawa era began. Our discussion of social change in Japan begins at this point, when the Tokugawa clan effected a unified national government that was under their rule for 267 years.

## THE TOKUGAWA ERA, 1600-1867

The Tokugawa family were *shoguns*. They established the seat of their rule in the village of Edo, now Tokyo. They knew well the difficulties of unified national government in Japan. By measures different from those that had failed in the past, they intended to freeze Japan in the existing social mold, prevent the rise of a local military leader such as had ended each previous period of national rule and perpetuate their own rule.



## The Tokugawa System

The Tokugawa wished to restrain the local rulers, the *daimyo*, but any attempt to eliminate the local governments would no doubt have provoked a successful rebellion. Instead, the Tokugawa set barriers around and between the *daimyo*. They divided them into three classes: the *shimpan daimyo*, most closely related by blood to the Tokugawa; the *fudai daimyo*, with a few exceptions those who had recognized Ieyasu as their overlord before the fighting in 1600; and the *tozama* or outer *daimyo*, those who formally had been of the same rank as Ieyasu in 1600. Within this group were former allies, neutrals and enemies who might be enemies again. Many of the Tokugawa measures were directed at holding the *tozama daimyo* forever in safe relationships.

Thus when occasion or pretense permitted, the Tokugawa accused a too powerful *daimyo* of disloyalty, executed him, moved his heir to lands farther from Edo and probably reduced in area, and placed one of the Tokugawa clan *daimyo* on his former lands. They kept the fiefs, or the land holdings, of the *fudai daimyo* small in size so that their power depended on their relationship to the Tokugawa. They almost completely filled the region of Japan near Edo with their clansmen, and also scattered them among the *tozama daimyos* farther away from Edo to serve as the eyes of the Tokugawa. While the Tokugawa dare not to try to control the internal administration of the fiefs, they did create inspectors who spied upon it. They forbade intermarriage or any alliances among the *daimyo*, and also forbade them to enlarge their armies or engage in any construction without Tokugawa permission.

Payments from the *daimyo* to the Tokugawa were small, were controlled by custom, and were not increased. However, to force the more powerful *daimyo* to spend large amounts of money and to get projects accomplished, the Tokugawa would give one of them the honor of constructing a large civil work or defense project, or supporting for a period of years the armed forces defending a section of the coast. (An unexpected result was to increase the technical capability of these *daimyo*.)

The Tokugawa acted to preserve the difference between social classes by forcing all peasants to surrender their swords, thus establishing a clear line between sword-carrying nobles and non-

sword-carrying commoners. They also prohibited many kinds of changes of occupation among the four social classes: the *samurai*, soldier-nobles who were the retainers, or in the service, of the *daimyo*; the peasants; the craftsmen and the laborers. A definite order of social ranking was decreed, farmers being next to *samurai* because agriculture was regarded as the economic basis of life, and merchants being at the bottom because they were regarded as non-productive. The prohibition against shifts among the occupations of farming, handicrafts and trade was not strictly enforced, but a sharp line between these groups and the *samurai* was maintained.

To keep the emperor from becoming the focus of a hostile alliance—a development that on several previous occasions had broken the power of a *shogunate*—the Tokugawa isolated him. They left him and his court at Kyoto, surrounded him, and permitted approach to him only through Tokugawa representatives, who carried messages in and replies out.

Of all the domestic measures of the Tokugawa to preserve their power, the most important was the requirement that the wife and children of every *daimyo* live in Edo under Tokugawa supervision, and that the *daimyo* himself maintain his residence there half of the time, in most cases every other year. *Daimyo* traditionally had made pilgrimages to present their respects to the current *shogun* and often had left their families in his care, so this requirement was not entirely new. Its purpose, of course, was to keep the families as hostages, or pledges, against revolt. However, since some of the major *daimyo* lived at distant places at the western tip of the main island of Honshu and on the farther islands of Kyushu and Shikoku, it was also intended to impose on them heavy expenses for travel that would keep them poor.

Lastly, to prevent hostile groups from making any alliance with foreigners, the Tokugawa forbade Japanese to leave Japan without Tokugawa consent (under penalty of death if they did so and returned) and barred all foreigners from Japan except a limited number of Chinese and Dutch traders. They kept the Dutch not only to obtain desired imports but also to get information about the West.

### Withdrawal of Status Respect

The Tokugawa system created in four social groups a strong

sense of being denied rights and position in the society which they valued and to which they felt they had just claim. One of these groups was the merchants. During the feudal period they had become prosperous and influential. Now, no matter how great their wealth, they were officially declared to be the lowest social class with restrictions on their dress, behavior and relationships to other groups that made their low status a public matter.

A second group was the *samurai*, who were affected in two ways. As a noble soldier-retainer, the *samurai* was attached to his lord's domain and his whole life was governed by loyalty and military service to his master. Now the wars in which many of the lords had been killed, and the Tokugawa policy of executing powerful *daimyo* or reducing their landholdings, deprived many *samurai* of their lords and their means of living. It has been estimated that under the Tokugawa rule between 1600 and 1650 some 400,000 *samurai* thus became masterless, being known as *ronin*, or wanderers. Under the Tokugawa system these wanderers lost their title and rank, because in the new order these men were no longer *samurai*; only nobles serving a *daimyo* were so classed. Thus they had either to sink into the peasant class or to make a humble existence in a town or city. Some wandered in roving bands. Others were spiritually wanderers, men who had abandoned or been deprived of their destined place in life.

The more general depressing effect on the *samurai*, however, was the imposition of national peace by the Tokugawa, which deprived the *samurai* of their central reason for existence. The function of guarding one's lord against his enemies and of fighting for him no longer existed.

Thirdly, there were the so-called "wealthy peasants," whose families had been managers of estates and who considered themselves above the ordinary peasants. Under the Tokugawa system the rigid division of the population into four social classes deprived them of their remaining contacts with the lower nobility and put them in the class of ordinary peasants. They had been sinking in life as the estates became of lessened importance. Now, with a new gap created between *samurai* and peasants, they found themselves in a lower social class.

Lastly, to some people the new treatment of the emperor may

have seemed little short of a crime. The isolation of the emperor removed him from his supreme position in a sense in which no previous domination of him had done. The Tokugawa, being practical men, treated him with great deference, but the fact remained that he had no voice whatever in national affairs and was completely inaccessible.

Perhaps a fifth group should be added, all of the *daimyo* and especially the *tozama daimyo*. While *daimyo* in the past had been subordinate to every *shogun*, the restrictions imposed by the Tokugawa constituted new socially humiliating treatment which created a sense of loss of status respect that the former relationship had not.

The Tokugawa system caused other great changes. Requiring the *daimyo* to keep their families in Edo and therefore go back and forth between Edo and their estates increased travel and trade between regions. Edo, Kyoto and Osaka became great cities, and the commerce necessary to supply them increased. Modern banking developed.

Spending was increased by the social pressure on each *daimyo* to indicate the high level of his position by the magnificence of his travel to and from Edo and the splendor of his establishment at Edo. Spending was also increased by the rapid development of city life. To meet their financial needs, the *daimyo* and their retainers increased the productivity of rice cultivation, introduced other crops, and expanded handicraft production and created new handicrafts. Productivity increased throughout the Tokugawa era. But the *daimyo* spent beyond their resources, however much these grew. They attempted to meet the financial strain in three ways: by borrowing from the merchants, squeezing money from the *samurai*, and perhaps demanding more from the peasants.

*Daimyo's* debts to merchants increased, and the income, wealth and influence of the merchants grew despite the social restrictions. By the last half of the 18th century some of them were able to change occupation and purchased from *samurai* or wealthy peasants their positions as landed families. Some merchants procured nobility for marriage to their daughters. But despite their new wealth, merchants were still social inferiors, finding a place only where the power of their money made it impossible to push them out.



As the financial position of the *daimyo* grew worse, they found it necessary to reduce the amount of money they paid their *samurai*. Some *samurai* were pushed down to the economic level of peasants. Various laws were passed for *samurai* relief, for example, laws canceling their debts. However, the worsening of their position continued.

Whether it was because the *daimyo* collected ever-increasing dues and levies from them, or because of other factors such as changing prices and harvests while their costs remained steady, the peasants found their level of living lower than before. Many lost their lands and the large landholdings increased. Peasant revolts became frequent. They testify vividly to the extremity to which peasants felt driven. Because the revolts were so unthinkable in Japanese culture, on occasion the peasant leaders surrendered voluntarily to death sentences after the revolt, having known in advance that while the protest was absolutely necessary the resulting death was inevitable.

Thus, as the Tokugawa era progressed, the sense of withdrawal of status respect felt by merchants, *samurai*, and peasants became more acute.

At the same time, the "wealthy peasants" were further lowered in status. With the change in the functions of *samurai*, those *samurai* who had been scattered over the large landholdings gradually left the villages and went to the central towns. There, they frequently managed village government affairs because they were likely to have inherited possession of the headmanships and other chief local offices. Thus, the "wealthy peasant" village leaders were further abandoned by the nobles on whom they had depended for guidance and prestige.

It would be difficult to find a clearer case of withdrawal of status respect from many of the higher elite, almost all of the lesser elite, and many of the simple folk than is provided by events in Tokugawa Japan. The results provide a classic case of the operations of the social and psychological mechanisms of retreatism and emergence from it with altered values and increased creativity.

### Manifestations of Retreatism

The retreatism took the form of a philosophy of "eat, drink,

and be merry." In Osaka, Kyoto, Edo, and on a lesser scale in the castle towns and throughout the country, there occurred a wave of interest in style, in the theater, gay life, entertaining art and romantic literature that offered escape from the unsatisfactory nature of everyday life.

New popular forms of drama developed. The historical dramas dealt with the loyalty to lord and duty of the *samurai*. The modern ones dealt with frustrated lovers, jealous wives and the like. Both were concerned with the conflict between duty and sentiment, both were romantic, and both were highly popular.

Another popular attraction was the life of the "gay quarters," sections of Osaka, Kyoto and Edo that became famous for the nature of their entertainment. The quarters provided gay and light-hearted feminine entertainment which men could not otherwise obtain because wives were confined strictly to the home and were not expected to be companions to their husbands. The life of the gay quarters, in which townspeople, merchants and *samurai* mingled and social class distinctions vanished, symbolizes the entire period.

The gay life was a retreat from the social tensions and problems of the times. We do not know the effect of those tensions on family life, but we do have a record of the cultural changes which occurred as time passed. In them the revolt against the traditional order which had appeared in earlier periods reached its climax and brought a social revolution.

### **What Followed Retreatism: Changes in Values and Knowledge of the World**

Early in the Tokugawa era the *samurai* perhaps faced a more acute personal problem than other classes. By the middle of the 17th century the military function which had been the central element of *samurai* status ceased to exist, and the *samurai* faced the problem of finding a new identity for themselves. Many of them ceased the attempt to understand why evil days had come upon them. However, the more thoughtful among them turned to the ancient sources of wisdom, and early in the Tokugawa era they found in Chinese writing descriptions of the proper activities of warriors. For a generation or two they turned to practicing military skills from earlier centuries, such

as shooting with bows and arrows—now discontinued for use in war. They also became learned in the Chinese writings concerning the rituals and manners of behavior which marked the warrior character.

Their search for the meaning of life caused them to cling to the old *samurai* code of behavior, which stressed loyalty, respect for and obedience to elders, courtesy or decency and high regard for learning. Many of them struggled to follow these virtues and thought of themselves as the preservers of Japanese morality. But after a time they found that the Chinese military writings had no relation to their own time, and that, because they had lost their occupation, they could hardly be the preservers of Japanese honor and morality. Many of them turned to the life of the gay quarters.

However, many *samurai* and others sought to relieve the tensions in their lives by finding new meaning in the religious traditions of Zen Buddhism and Confucianism. These taught that a social system with sharp class divisions is just and right, that everyone has his natural place in society in one of these divisions and should do his duty in it, that a just government which observes these principles has the right to the loyalty of every citizen. Persons who could find these principles acceptable could find increased satisfaction in the Tokugawa social order.

The merchant class in particular adopted much of this belief. If it was the decree of heaven that they should remain within the merchant class and do their duty within it without jealous striving to attain another rank, then their lot in life was after all divinely sanctioned and was not merely an imposition of the Tokugawa. They found one teaching of especial interest, the virtue of industrious work in one's occupation. They accepted the virtue of simplicity, frugality and industriousness in work as parts of one's duty to family and society.

The monk, Ishida Baigan, who lived from 1685 to 1744, preached these doctrines. He also taught that all persons are *samurai*, each class serving in its appointed task just as *samurai* serve in theirs. Merchants, he asserted, are administrators of property, who deserve just profits as a just reward. With their social rank thus blessed by being considered equal to that of the *samurai*, the merchants found the philosophy very attractive.

The peasants, too, found the doctrines of natural class divisions and the duty and virtue of work somewhat comforting, and doctrines somewhat like those of Baigan spread through the villages.

As life progressed and anxieties continued, some persons looked in other places for wisdom and found it in the ancient Japanese writings and in the teachings of the old Japanese religion of Shinto, which stressed the worship of ancestors and ancient heroes and the divinity of the emperor. They rejected all other religions. They learned that there had been a time when the emperor had ruled the nation. Consequently, on the basis of Shinto teachings they concluded that the emperor represented the will of the gods, and that every Japanese therefore owed limitless obligation and obedience to him in political as well as religious matters. He was the rightful ruler of the nation. The moral was clear: the Tokugawa *shoguns* had seized power, and perhaps the ills of the nation were due to their action against the gods.

They also learned to believe in the total rejection of China. In addition to devotion to the emperor, they developed very strong nationalism and a belief that Japan was superior to all other nations.

These beliefs spread widely through Japan in the later part of the Tokugawa era, which, I think, clearly indicates the emotional need felt by Japanese to find scapegoats, or someone to blame for their troubles. These scapegoats were found in foreigners and in the Tokugawa. Finding them enabled the people to see, outside of themselves, causes of the rage and frustration which they felt unconsciously. This discovery made these emotions seem more rational and more bearable.

## **Results: Political and Economic Change:**

### **The End of the Era**

Beginning in about the middle of the 18th century, there was very evident decay in the Tokugawa political system. The Tokugawa relied almost wholly on the proceeds from their lands for revenues, and in the last half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th, they found their resources increasingly inadequate. The numbers of landless peasants were increasing, and



disorder was rising in the countryside. Merchants were buying their way into social positions that were forbidden to them. Merchants and wealthy peasants were hiring *samurai* who had been reduced to poverty to teach their children forbidden knowledge, such as political theory and the arts of government. The stronger *daimyo* had grown in power and were violating some of the old restrictions. The basic trouble was that old loyalties were dissolving under the pressure of long-continued withdrawal of status respect, and in the presence of this change the Tokugawa were frustrated and confused.

The *samurai* and others who had developed a strong nationalism were aware of the weakening of the Tokugawa rule. They began to see the possibility of being able to take action to end the evil conditions that they believed caused their troubles and tensions.

Other individuals and groups saw their personal release in the new religious doctrines that stressed industriousness and the virtue and nobility of work. Now, technical knowledge was available from the "European barbarians" whose power was so evident. Many ways of gaining economic strength had been distasteful, but an increasing number of individuals now believed that if no other route to respect for one's place in the society was available, economic achievement was a good use of one's energies after all.

There were two important causes of this new view of life. There were now many persons who possessed enough creativity to look at life in new ways. Also, they could see no other way to solve the problem of denial of status respect. The knowledge of Western achievements and the prestige in which Western power was held must have speeded the appearance of the new element in Japanese thought.

Thus, a movement toward "Dutch studies" occurred. Some *samurai* and some others began to learn the Dutch language even as early as the 17th century in order to gain acquaintance with the knowledge of Europe. The number grew slowly, then in the later part of the 18th century it increased rapidly. Dutch grammars and Dutch-Japanese dictionaries were prepared, language schools opened, and many books or parts of books were

translated dealing with mathematics, geography, astronomy, navigation, engineering, military tactics, medicine, government and other sciences. Later, important schools for the "study of barbarian books" were opened. In the first half of the 19th century laboratories were established to try the processes described in the scientific books. Then full-scale enterprises were established—an iron ore furnace, as well as one or more additional furnaces, and a workshop to construct, among other things, an iron cannon. The emphasis was on metal work and armament.

The *samurai* were probably drawn strongly to such studies for an additional reason—because the Westerners were powerful warriors. The study of Western strength was both a symbolic substitute for the vanished power of the *samurai* and a symbolic protest against the weakness of the Tokugawa. Later the relation of technical studies to the defense of Japan became more and more clear. The threat to Japan from the West grew. During the first half of the 19th century Russia and Western powers made a number of "requests" of Japan, which she refused with difficulty. In seeking the sources of Western strength the *samurai* were preparing to perform what in their eyes was the noblest of their historic functions, the defense of Japan.

By the first half of the 19th century these various forces for change had created almost unbearable tensions in Japanese society. The disunity of the social order became more and more evident. The merchants, the peasants and the *samurai* were breaching on social walls; the stronger *daimyo* were nibbling away at the restrictions that had been placed on them. The Tokugawa became more and more incapable of governing.

At this extremely important point in Japanese history a foreign power appeared again, this time with force not to be denied. In 1853 American Commodore Perry appeared with his ships in Tokyo Bay and announced that he would return the next year to obtain a commercial treaty. He returned with four small warships, with which he could have closed the harbor and starved the city. The Tokugawa signed a treaty that opened two ports to American trade and limited Japan's power to regulate the trade. In 1857 the American consul, Townsend Harris, bargained for a further agreement expanding trade with Japan. Other Western countries demanded and received from

the Japanese commercial treaties similar to that with the United States.

The Japanese were faced with the great question of how to respond to the aggression from abroad. The Tokugawa answer was: "Open the ports and help Tokugawa." It meant: "We do not have the strength to resist the foreigners. To prepare for resistance would require forceful social changes which must be avoided. Therefore we must open the ports." But those who opposed the Tokugawa cried: "Loyalty to the Emperor. Repel the barbarians." What they meant was: "We must acquire the strength needed to repel the barbarians. To do so will require forceful social action. Let us restore the position of the emperor, thereby preserving a symbolic link with the past. And, rallying around him, let us overthrow the Tokugawa so that we may continue with the job of making the necessary changes." Steadily the support of the Tokugawa lessened. In 1867 they formally surrendered the power of government to the emperor and the new forces took control of the government, led by high-ranking *samurai*.

The new leaders did not make the emperor the supreme political power, but they made great political changes. They destroyed the structure of local political power, which no previous national leader had dared to touch. They eliminated the *daimyo* and the fiefs over which they ruled, taking the *daimyo's* share of agricultural income as governmental revenue and placing the *daimyo* and *samurai* on governmental allowances of money. They removed all local barriers to trade. Soon after, by reducing their allowances, they forced the *daimyo* and other *samurai* to go to work. Within half a dozen years the new governmental leaders had entered upon a vigorous program of governmental promotion of new industrial, transport and financial concerns. Hardly any large enterprise appeared except with governmental support. Private enterprise also appeared in less spectacular but basically important activities, the stream of technical change widened and deepened, and Japan began that remarkable period of economic growth which has continued to the present.

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The very brief history we have given here provides an answer to the question: Why did rapid economic growth begin in Japan sooner than in any other non-Western society except perhaps Russia? I suggest that the answer lies in two important historical differences between Japan and other non-Western societies. First, they had been free from the bad effects of colonial disruption. Then, the repeated long-continued withdrawal of expected status from important groups in her society drove them to retreatism, which caused them to emerge alienated from traditional values and with increased creativity. This fact, when other means of regaining self-assurance seemed not available, led them to technological progress.

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## THE TRANSITION IN COLOMBIA

IN Colombia, the third largest country of South America, industrial production began to rise fairly rapidly by the beginning of the present century. The rise became so great that the country's total production per person in 1957 was twice as much as in the mid-1920's, only 30 years before.

This economic growth has occurred in a country which consists of three areas barred from the outside world and from each other by rough mountain ranges, and of a steamy tropical lowland. One could hardly choose a less likely place in Latin America. Colombia's economic progress is therefore doubly impressive. Why did it occur?

## THE SETTING

**The Land and the People**

Colombia is the most northwestern country of South America. Its coastline is interrupted by the Isthmus, or narrow land strip, of Panama. In the western half of the country three high ranges of the Andes mountains, which are called the western, central and eastern Cordilleras, thrust northward from Ecuador. The central and western mountains disappear 150 miles or so short of the Atlantic, but the eastern range continues to the ocean. Between the central and eastern ranges the Magdalena River flows the length of the country to the Atlantic Ocean. The Cauca River flows down through the valley west of the central range, joining the Magdalena perhaps 125 miles from the ocean.

In the eastern Cordillera there lies a high plateau, called the Sabana, some 400 miles south of the Atlantic. On it stands the capital city of Bogotá at an altitude of 8,500 feet. The two other most important cities lie in the valley of the Cauca, Cali some 150 miles southwest of Bogotá and Medellín some 150 miles northwest, so that the three form a triangle with equal sides. The area around Cali is known as the Valley of the Cauca, or simply the Valley; that around Medellín as Antioquia. Between

the two, hills and ridges only less rough than the Cordilleras cross the Cauca Valley and create a formidable barrier to north-south travel.

The three cities have grown rapidly during the last century. In 1960 the population of Bogotá plus its many suburbs was one million or more and that of Medellín and Cali may be estimated very roughly at 500,000 each. The fourth city in size, Barranquilla, at the mouth of the Magdalena River, is somewhat smaller. Between Barranquilla and the other cities lie the hot swampy lowlands of the lower Magdalena and then the mountains. It is difficult to over-emphasize how removed Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali were from the world and from each other until airlines and improved surface routes over the mountains made them accessible in the 1920's. Until some time after 1900 every pound of material which came into any of the three cities was carried over the mountains on the backs of animals or men. No vehicle could cross the mountain paths.

Except for a handful of non-Spanish immigrants, Colombians are of Spanish, Indian and Negro blood.

Formally, the entire country is Roman Catholic in religion, although in the villages there is a noticeable tendency to identify some saints with pre-Christian gods or guardian spirits. The handful of non-Catholic Christian congregations are largely composed of foreigners.

### Historical Background

The Spanish first landed on the Atlantic coast of what is now Colombia in the year 1500. Between 1530 and 1540 they discovered the Sabana, the Valley and Antioquia, conquered the Indian tribes in each, and established settlements. In all three regions the Spaniards were seeking gold and silver. Here and there throughout Colombia they found gold and silver deposits, a few of them of some size, but on the Sabana and in the Valley they found none. However, they remained because of the fertility of the soil and the attractiveness of the environment.

Under the decrees of the King of Spain, each conqueror was permitted to occupy an area of land and to take a number of Indians under his guardianship and require work from them. In return for this he was to assure their material welfare and to

confer upon them the benefit of Christianity. In practice, the lands became the property of the individual Spanish families and the Indians became slaves. On the Sabana the land grants were large and the Indian tribes peaceable and skilled in agriculture, and the conquerors soon became landed gentry, people with social position. In the Valley a similar development occurred except that the land was less suitable for farming and the settlers specialized in cattle raising. In Antioquia the land was too poor for profitable farming and too rugged for cattle raising, but a number of small gold and silver deposits were found and attention centered more than in other places on the quest for wealth in gold mining. The Indians in Antioquia were gatherers, not cultivators, and did not learn to farm well.

For 50 years or so two or three areas in Antioquia yielded considerable wealth in gold; but much cheap labor was required to extract it and the methods of extraction were primitive ones learned from the Indians. Through the exhausting both of the richest gold-bearing rock and of the labor supply, by about 1630 gold production had passed its peak. From the middle of the 17th century until almost 1900 it continued barely on a subsistence basis. It was increasingly the descendants of the conquerors, who called themselves Spaniards, who did the mining, often with pick and hammer and hand screening of the crushed ore or the sands. The most prosperous communities of the region after the beginning of the 17th century seem to have been Medellín and Rionegro, which benefited not from the mining itself but from the trade by which the miners were supplied.

Spain's economic control of her colonies in the New World followed the usual pattern. Trade was permitted only with the mother country, and on both sales to and purchases from the colony taxes were levied which greatly burdened the producers in the colony.

Politically, Spain's dominance of both the home and colonial governments was complete. The colonists had no representation in Spain and no power in the administration of the colony. In addition, when in Spain they did not have the freedom of movement or the full right to hold property that a native of Spain possessed, and socially they were considered inferior. The colonists fiercely resented their position of social and political inferior-

ity. In turn, if they could claim pure Spanish blood, they looked down on persons of mixed blood, the *mestizos*, or "men of color."

In 1810 the colonials of Spanish blood on the Sabana revolted, demanding reform and self-rule. They were defeated by Spanish troops, but their demands continued, and, under the leadership of the Venezuelan general and revolutionists, Simón Bolívar, the Spanish colonial lands became an independent republic in 1819.

## ECONOMIC CHANGE: THE HISTORICAL RECORD

### **The Gradual Expansion of Agriculture and Manufacturing**

During the 18th century little economic change is recorded. In the 19th century, and especially after independence, economic change became slightly more noticeable. The production of unrefined brown sugar increased. More important, coffee cultivation, which was known in the first years of the republic in valleys near Venezuela, spread to Antioquia. It then spread further to the slopes on the edge of the Sabana, and finally to the district of Caldas, which was within the Valley but peopled with Antioqueños. It became the nation's largest industry. After 1880 coffee cultivation increased rapidly in Antioquia and Caldas.

New industries gradually arose in the 19th century and contributed to the rise in per capita income. Early in the century the textile industry of the Sabana had been injured by the import of foreign fabrics, but from 1830 to 1860 there was an increase and growth of consumer goods industries. During the next 10 or 20 years production of china dishes and additional textiles began. Steam-powered wheat mills were established. Gas lighting was introduced into Bogotá in 1876.

Meanwhile heavier industry had also been appearing. At some time after 1810 iron mining methods were improved in three mining areas, and an iron refining plant was established. At some time after 1830 the refinery installed a blast furnace to remove the impurities from the ore. At about the same time, production of some chemicals began. The first commercial bank in Colombia was a branch of an English bank established in Bogotá in 1865. Within a year or two the first bank owned by Colombians, the Banco de Bogotá, was opened. After 1875



iron processing developed further. The Sabana felt a sense of great progress as the century came to a close, and in 1899 an industrial exposition at Bogotá celebrated that progress.

Industrial activity was more impressive on the Sabana than anywhere else in Colombia during the 19th century. At the other end of the scale, the Valley continued with very little industry. The region's economy rested largely on general agriculture, the raising of cattle and the production of sugar and later of coffee.

In Antioquia in the first part of the 19th century the main industries other than agriculture and mining seem to have been production of hats and beer. Then, during the last half of the century, economic growth in Antioquia, although starting later than that of the Sabana, seemed to show greater vigor. By the 1860's breweries with advanced methods and various other small consumer goods enterprises existed. During the 1870's and 1880's many others appeared. In the 1870's textile factories began to appear, and by the end of the 1880's small factories with machine looms had appeared. Iron works established in 1864 survived and 20 years later entered upon production of simple mining and agricultural machinery and especially machinery used in coffee processing. By the end of the century production of this machinery was a flourishing industry.

This incomplete listing of consumer goods industries that developed in Colombia during the 19th century indicates the trend of events. It seems fairly certain that per capita income was increasing steadily during the last 40 or 50 years of the century, and quite possibly earlier as well.

### **The Development of Transportation**

During this period of gradual economic growth, transportation facilities were remarkably primitive. Before 1850, except in the immediate vicinity of cities, there were only trails for pack animals. Items too large or heavy to be packed by mule were transported on poles between mule backs or human backs. Extremely heavy ones were drawn up mountainsides by ropes. Coffee, sugar, machinery, pianos, even the first locomotives—everything was carried in this manner out to the rivers or in from the rivers.

Indeed, even trails were not present everywhere. The first "mule road" from Cali over the Cordillera toward the Pacific was not completed until 1866. In the 1870's railroad construction began. Between 1872 and 1880 eight railroads were built, extending a few miles in one direction or another from major cities or closing the first few miles of a link between some city and the Magdalena River. By 1890 four had failed financially and had ceased to operate. However, the early railroad lines on the Sabana and in Antioquia which carried freight for the first part of the journey from the Magdalena to the one region or the other, were successful. The rapid development of coffee cultivation in Antioquia and Caldas came only when railroad and truck transportation to the Magdalena was possible.

The city of Medellín had no modern means of transport until a railroad was built in 1909, and no direct railroad connection to the Magdalena River until a tunnel was completed in 1929. Not until some time in the 1930's did a road over the Cordillera Central permit motor transport into and out of Antioquia to the east and south; and not until 1958 was a direct railroad connection from Medellín to Bogotá completed.

Cali was similarly mountain-locked until the completion of the railroad from Buenaventura on the Pacific, over the Cordillera Occidental, to Cali in 1914. A motor road from Cali to Bogotá was completed in 1928, and one from Cali to Medellín in 1940 or 1941. The last link of a railroad between Cali and Medellín was completed in 1942. No railroad crosses the mountain ranges between Cali and Bogotá even today. A road across the mountain from Cali to Bogotá was completed in 1928, but even now it is still cheaper for most freight to use a combined road-railroad route—by railroad northeast to the town of Armania, then across the Cordillera by truck, then by railroad to Bogotá.

### **The 20th Century**

After 1900, while transportation facilities were still primitive, heavier industry began to expand. The first modern sugar refinery began production in 1901 (in the Valley), the first modern textile factory in 1906 (in Antioquia), and the first major cement factory in 1909 (on the Sabana). One after another, others

appeared. Small metallurgical factories increased their output; production of simple agricultural and mining machinery increased in importance. New glass factories were established. Electric light and power industries became numerous and prosperous. The industrial system became able to manage the construction of larger and larger, more and more demanding structures.

Agriculture steadily declined in relative importance, although its output continued to increase in amount, and manufacturing and smaller industries steadily and rapidly increased in importance.

Industrial growth was steady in the 1920's. Although it fell in 1930 and 1931, when imports were reduced by a shortage of foreign exchange, after those two years Colombian businessmen had gained enough technical skills so that absence of imports provided an opportunity rather than a handicap, and industrial expansion continued.

Since World War Two industrialization has occurred within agriculture. In the hot lands only slightly above sea level stretching from the middle section of the Magdalena between Bogotá and Medellín down to the Atlantic, Colombian businessmen have established large-scale mechanized production of rice and other tropical crops and large cattle ranches. Large unused areas remain; the taming of the hot lowland jungles is continuing. Growth in this sector of the Colombian economy is as important in some ways as the continuing industrial expansion. Technological progress is now so deeply rooted in Colombian behavior patterns that it is safe to say that economic growth will continue indefinitely.

### WHY DID GROWTH BEGIN?

#### **Not for the Economic Reasons Conventionally Advanced**

One thing is clear: Economic growth in Colombia did not begin for the economic reasons usually given as causes of such growth.

Foreign companies or individuals did not provide the capital that started it. Foreign investment in Colombia before World War Two was small. Generally, foreign capital did not begin flowing into Colombia until after economic growth was firmly

implanted and the expanding market attracted foreign enterprises.

Contacts with foreign goods and technology were not greater in Colombia than in other places where growth has been slower in starting. On the contrary, as I have noted, access to the Sabana, the Valley and Antioquia, where growth has centered, was extremely difficult until well into the 20th century. In addition the seedbed of growth was Antioquia, which in turn had far less opportunity for contact with Europe and other countries in the Americas than did Bogotá, Colombia's national capital.

Growth did not wait upon the development of transportation and other facilities that created a national market or otherwise laid a base for progress. The extremely primitive state of transportation until growth was in progress has been described. Transportation, communication and power facilities all developed in response to the demands created by growing production rather than as prior steps which laid the basis for it. Production of manufactured goods until about 1910 was for small regional markets, not for a national market. It is possible that the protection provided by transportation difficulties stimulated rather than hindered early industrialization. Even today production of cement, steel products and other heavy products is for regional markets which are limited by transportation costs.

Thus, growth began despite the supposed economic barriers, not because those barriers were removed.

### **The Antioqueños**

It appears that the answer to the question why growth began is: Because of the enterprise of the Antioqueños.

Colombians will say that virtually all of the nation's important industrial enterprises are run by Antioqueños. "If they did not establish them," it is said, "they own them now." This is not strictly true, of course, because capable and effective businessmen have arisen in every region of the country. However, the great number of Antioqueños is impressive.

From the 1956 Census of Industry I obtained lists of all non-financial private business companies employing more than 100 workers in Cundinamarca, in Antioquia and in the Valley. I then asked informed individuals to identify the founders of



these enterprises by nationality, and, if they were Colombians, by their regional origin.

Of the 148 enterprises concerning which information was obtained, 110, or just less than three-fourths, were established by persons referred to as "Old Colombians." Among the 110 enterprises established by Old Colombians, 75 or 68 per cent were started by Antioqueños. In 1905, an appropriate year for this comparison, Antioqueños were only 40 per cent of the population of the three regions of Cundinamarca, Antioquia and the Valley. However, that 40 per cent provided more than two-thirds of the businessmen of large companies, while the remaining 60 per cent provided less than one-third. In proportion to population, more than three times as many Antioqueños became businessmen as Old Colombians of non-Antioqueño stock.

It must be concluded that there were factors at work in Antioquia that were not present or were much weaker in other places, especially since until some time in the 19th century Antioquia was the poorest of the regions of Colombia.

Why the burst of creative activity in business and technology by the people of one region?

### WHY THE ANTIOQUEÑOS?

#### **Not Because of Economic Advantages**

The reason does not lie in a larger market, greater access to technical knowledge abroad, better natural resources, greater capital. On the first two of these four points, a great advantage lay with the people of the Sabana, and they probably had an advantage with respect to the other two also. The population of the Sabana, throughout both the colonial era and the 19th century, was considerably larger than that of Antioquia. The Sabana had the best land and the most prosperous agriculture in Colombia throughout the colonial period. Next most prosperous was agriculture in the Valley and the regions south of it. Per capita income in both must have been higher than in Antioquia. The market available on the Sabana was much the largest in Colombia, one reason why the first attempts at development of industry, during the first half of the 19th century, occurred there.

Further, during the colonial period and the 19th century Bogotá was the main point of Colombian contact with Europe and the foreign world in general. Before independence it had been the most important administrative seat. After independence it became the nation's capital. Foreign diplomats, representatives of the sciences and arts who visited Colombia, and foreign businessmen seeking to establish trade came first of all to Bogotá. Until the late 19th century many more families on the Sabana than in other places were wealthy enough and sufficiently interested in culture and the foreign world to send their sons and daughters abroad. Through contacts with Peru and Ecuador, the Valley had more lines of communication with the outside world. Of the three regions, Antioquia was the most isolated.

The only natural resource to be noted in Antioquia, other than the gold, is the number of small waterfalls. These provided the occasion for the location of several textile mills at the beginning of the century, but they were of no importance in the later development of the mills. Greater falls exist on and at the edge of the Sabana.

### **Creative Personality**

One is led to the conclusion that the difference between Antioqueños and others lay not in the external conditions but in the people. And as soon as this possibility is considered, convincing evidence appears.

First, differences appear in psychological tests in which a number of Colombian business and community leaders participated. The successful economic innovators of Antioquia in 1957 were so different in personality structure from a group of equally prominent community leaders in other parts of Colombia who were interviewed and studied, that the Antioqueños may be thought of as a different breed of men.

The leaders who were studied in Antioquia were a group of approximately 20 businessmen in Medellín whose careers marked them as effective innovators and business executives. Not all were among the wealthiest men in the community; some started as poor men and their wealth was only moderate. The contrasting group consisted of community leaders in Popayán, a city that was a cultural and political center in colonial days and the 19th

century and that now lives in the past.

The tests consisted of showing each individual a series of simple pictures—a young man and an older one; another of a young man and woman; another of a group of men around a table; and so on. Concerning each, the individual is asked to use his imagination to tell what caused the situation in the scene pictured, what the individuals in the pictures are thinking and feeling, and what the outcome of the situation will be. In doing so the person being tested tells much of his own attitudes toward life, because no interpretations of the pictures come to his mind so readily as ones which arise out of his own view of the world.

The responses of the Medellín innovators, the Antioqueños, indicated that (1) they saw a situation as a problem to be solved; (2) they were aware that a problem must be worked at if it was to be solved; (3) they had confidence in their ability to solve the problem, although it might sometimes cause anxiety and tension; (4) they saw the persons in the pictures not as types but as individuals. Thus they had a keen sense of the realities of a situation and saw the world as manageable if approached with good judgment and hard work.

The Popayán leaders associated a picture with something in literature or the arts, philosophized about the ways of youth, were led into speculation about the course of history—but seemed to see no problems in the situations pictured. Or, if they saw problems, they had formula solutions for them ("the old know best; he should listen to his father"), or pictured success without any suggestion that it would require effort and pain. Frequently they gave the impression of running away from the possibility that they might be facing a problem, as though it made them uneasy. They found it easy to turn to imagination or dreams not closely connected with reality. They saw the world as not manageable, one's position as already determined.

There was a range of response within each group with regard to various elements, but the differences between the groups were remarkable.

It should be emphasized that what is portrayed is not a difference in personality between all Antioqueños and all other Colombians. There are undoubtedly creative individuals, some of whom have turned their talents to problems of technology

and other fields, in every region of Colombia. What is suggested, however, is that there are more persons of creative personality among Antioqueños than in other regions, and that this is an important cause of their greater success as business executives.

Along with this creativity goes an attitude that any worthwhile man will get into business for himself and be successful. A prominent Antioqueño executive stated that when he came home from college in the 1930's and took a salaried job with a large corporation, his action in becoming merely a hired employee was looked upon as unusual and not very commendable.

There probably is also a regional difference in the attitude toward doing the low-paid work necessary to get a start. The chief of an enterprise with operations in four centers in Colombia told me that the learning time for office and record-keeping detail is clearly somewhat shorter in Antioquia than in other parts of the country.

Finally, there is a feeling that effective work is a social duty. It is felt by many Antioqueños that the man who fails to put his capital at work productively in business is somehow lacking in the best qualities and is failing in a duty to the community. "He neither uses his axe nor lends it," is the Antioqueño phrase of disapproval.

Having asserted that these differences in personality exist, we must attempt to find why they exist. If there is a personality difference, what is its source?

### **Ethnic, or Group Differences**

There has been widespread belief that the difference in personality is due to Jewish blood. It is based on the legend that the early immigrants in Antioquia were Spanish Jews who forged records of Christian blood to obtain permission to migrate. Businessmen in Bogotá, who look down on their strong competitors from Antioquia and are proud of being pure Catholics, will call the Antioqueños "New Christians." But history shows this legend to be false, and the religious courts that looked for heretics, or people who opposed church doctrines, for almost two centuries found no Jews in Antioquia.

Another explanation for Antioqueño business success is that they are descended from Basques, the people from the rough



mountains of Spain. The Basques, being of strong individual character and having survived in poor country, are thought to have the traits that lead to success in business. Also, it is thought that the Basques would naturally migrate to Antioquia because it is the same kind of country as their own region in Spain.

It is quite possible that there is somewhat more Basque ancestry in Antioquia than in other regions of Colombia, but the difference, if any, is not great. The difference between Antioqueños and the people of other regions in Colombia is too great to be explained by the possibility of Basque ancestors. Some other factors must be important.

### **Mining Experience as a Cause**

Is it possible that their careers as petty miners prepared the Antioqueños to be industrialists? It seems reasonable to suppose that to some degree it did.

From some time in the first half of the 17th century the Spaniards themselves were workers in the mines. If we take 1850 as the date when the process of economic growth had its early beginnings, we may say that for three centuries previously Antioqueños had been managing the mines and for two centuries had been working in them with their own hands. The Spanish adventurers came to the new world with the dream and hope of being lords of creation who would make their fortunes romantically and rule over their own little kingdoms. Even though things did not happen just as they had hoped, many of them made this dream come true on the Sabana and in the Valley. Since they were determined to forget their humble past, it is likely that they set a high value on being an upper class of landowners.

But in Antioquia they had to work again with their hands, with tools, at dirty work. There is reason to think that at first they yielded to indifference; but by six or eight generations the need to believe in the worth of the occupation to which one and one's ancestors have voluntarily devoted their lives asserted itself, and the Antioqueños found value in their labor.

The fact that large risks were involved in mining forced a social invention of some importance. To the traditional Spaniards, family ties were of great importance, and the logical unit of

economic activity was the family. However, a single mining venture might take all the family capital, and by risking it in a single venture one might lose it all and leave the family in complete poverty. Therefore, the very regard for the family which is at the base of the family relations in other places forced the Antioqueños to divide the risks of mining ventures among a number of families.

At the present time, even in Antioquia, business corporations, no matter how large, are usually family owned and those where the top officials are not closely related by blood are uncommon. But there are more corporations that are not family owned in Antioquia than in other parts of Colombia. This may be explained by the fact that the Antioqueños had to divide the risks of their mining ventures.

The business executive, the kind of man who dares to try new ventures and new methods, must be a good judge of risks. Perhaps engaging in mining ventures gave the Antioqueños experience and judgment in business risk-taking. It is probably more important that their mining experience gave the Antioqueños familiarity with machinery and mechanical operations. Perhaps apart from the higher valuation of work with their hands and with machines, their experience in mining gave them more skill, confidence and judgment in mechanical operations.

However, since mining was also conducted in other parts of Colombia, it would seem that, although it is certainly one cause of the difference in Antioqueños, it was not a major influence.

### Trading and Economic Development

Another possible explanation lies in regional differences when large-scale trading in Colombia declined early in the 20th century.

In Bogotá families who had made fortunes of some size in trading did one or both of two things. They educated their sons for the professions. Also, whether or not they did this, they invested their money in land and entered into the land-owning elite. The professions and life as a member of the landed gentry were the two social positions of highest status, and they turned to them.

In Cali such families turned to various occupations, including the established cattle business, but there was no attempt to

become landed gentry as in Bogotá.

In Antioquia there were no cattle ranches or landed estates to acquire. There was no landed gentry with social prestige like that in the region around Bogotá, and no society in which the professions were of such high status. Lacking all these, the Antioqueño families with money went into industry.

But this explanation is not enough. It tells why more Antioqueños entered industry, but it does not explain their greater skill in business, their greater foresight as business executives and their superior ability to organize.

We must look for something else to explain why Antioqueños are different.

### **Social Tensions**

There is an influence affecting personality in Antioquia that is less obvious to common sense than those so far discussed above but that seems of more importance. This is the effect of withdrawal from Antioqueños of respect for their status in the society.

As I have noted, the Antioqueños, like the settlers in other regions, came from Spanish ancestors. In Spain they had been of equal status with the immigrants to other regions, and they looked upon themselves as of equal worth in the new land. But they were not looked upon as equals by Colombians of the other regions.

Throughout the colonial period and in the early years of independence trade and economic growth were slow in Antioquia. The people there were less successful than those in other regions, who therefore looked down on Antioqueños as retarded. Also, the Bogotanos, the Caleños and the inhabitants of Popayán, who had traditional attitudes, looked down on the Antioqueños as socially inferior because they worked with their hands.

That attitude toward Antioqueños is still evident today. It is expressed when a Bogotano calls them "New Christians." It is not caused by resentment at the present success of the Antioqueños. It existed before that success was achieved, for instance in the false legend of the 19th century that the Antioqueños had Jewish blood, which was to say that they were alien and therefore inferior.

Antioquia seemed behind the other regions for several reasons. Histories record that political events occurred in Bogotá, Popayán, the Valley and Cartagena, but Antioquia is seldom mentioned. When technical experts were sent to Colombia to suggest improvements in the mines, they did not visit Antioquia. Schools or scientific institutes were established by the Spanish government of the colonial administration at Bogotá, Popayán and Cartagena, but not at Medellín. When armies from Antioquia joined in the nation's civil wars, they were less successful than armies from other regions. Apparently they did not fight with zeal. When a political leader in the civil wars was exiled or fled from his native region, he went to Antioquia as though it were a foreign territory not involved in the struggle.

If the Antioqueños had thought of themselves as inferior in the sense of a lower class in a traditional society, the attitude of the people of the other regions would not have affected them. But they did not think of themselves as inferior. Today they are as conscious of the attitudes of many other Colombians toward them as an outsider is, and they resent them. Undoubtedly they did so in the 19th and 18th centuries. I suggest that this tension, by its effect on family environment, caused changes in personality that led to creativity. I suggest, too, that as these changes in personality proceeded, the Antioqueños sought restlessly to prove their worth and, in the world of the 19th and 20th centuries, found what they sought in economic skill.

Over a series of generations the Antioqueños seem to have passed through a period of indifference or retreatism and then become creative. Colombian accounts imply that the Antioqueños in colonial times were inefficient, reckless, gamblers—all characteristics which may be associated with retreatism as I have defined it. The entire sequence of historical events suggests that the Antioqueños reacted gradually over a period of several centuries to withdrawal of status respect, and that this reaction and its effect on their personalities form an important thread in the explanation of the economic growth of Colombia. It also explains why Antioqueños are today dominant in Colombian business and industry.



## COLONIALISM AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**The Pressures of Colonialism**

COLONIAL rule created extreme psychological pressures on the subject people not only as a result of the actions of colonial masters but also because of what the colonial administrators were and what their presence meant to the subject people.

To begin with, they came unwanted and conquered the society by force. In doing so they showed that in their view the society's structure of political and social power was not worth preserving. In their administration they regrouped local government areas, provided for choice of officials in new ways, and modified other traditional political practices. If native rulers were left in their places, they could rule in name only, having no real power but forced to obey the conquerors. Thus colonialism disrupted the old society and forced upon it an alien system of rule.

It also disrupted the economic life of the native society. New taxes were imposed, and in order to get the money to pay them the workers had to bring their produce to the market or offer their labor to the foreigners. In those circumstances traditional family and community relationships of great psychological importance were disrupted. The European system of land ownership was often introduced, destroying family and tribal rights in land that had been for ages the social basis of existence in the villages.

New laws were introduced that ignored or destroyed the traditional ways of settling certain disputes. The new rulers did not follow the native religion, and, even if they did not forbid or interfere with traditional religious rituals and practices, their attitude toward them was one of disbelief or contempt.

Perhaps equally important, by their very daily existence the European colonials indicated in countless ways their contempt for the traditional culture. They built their houses differently, used different furniture, wore different clothing, scorned traditional methods of preparing food, and so on through every aspect of living.

Lastly, the European masters would not meet native-born individuals as social equals. They excluded them from their homes and their clubs, required them to use forms of address which indicated the inferiority of the speaker, and informed them in a great variety of other deliberate and unconscious ways that they were regarded as inferior and not worthy of respect. The meaning of such a relationship was that the people were tools being used for the benefit of the Europeans.

The attitude of the conquerors would not have mattered if they had no prestige in the native society. But they had the tremendous prestige of overwhelming power, and so their attitude could not be ignored. Thus, being looked upon as inferior and having their traditional society disrupted by the colonial conquerors created intense emotional pressures on the subject people.

### **Retreatism in Colonial Societies**

When such pressures had persisted for one or two generations, they induced retreatist personality in most members of colonial societies. Adults responded to their rage and frustration with behavior in the home which led to retreatism in their children.

In many accounts of colonial societies one may read of the indifference of the people, of their lack of interest in affairs beyond the immediate circles of their lives. Leaders of Western countries, seeing this indifference, believed that the people of colonial areas had no thoughts or feelings about matters beyond their immediate understanding.

Therefore, the Westerners were shocked when, after World War Two, the people of colonial countries voted overwhelmingly for independence. They were still more shocked at the violence with which mobs in many countries manifested their hatred and rage once the circumstances were such that they dared admit these emotions to themselves. But those actions are understandable if we recognize that the indifference was not that of lack of feeling but that of retreatism, which always conceals intense unconscious rage. For generations adults in the society had perceived the contempt of the colonial masters for the values of the society. The deep belief of the people in those values had conflicted with their respect for, or fear of, the power

of the colonial rulers. The conflict had caused intense anxiety, as well as rage that it was necessary to repress. Children observing this anxiety and humiliation in adults had learned to repress their values, as a defense against pain, but the process had created rage, none the less intense because it was unconscious. From generation to generation the effect had deepened; retreatism became more complete.

## OTHER REACTIONS

Although retreatism was the most common reaction of colonial subjects to the tensions which developed in the home environment, the behavior of individuals who came most directly under the pressure of almost complete absence of status respect, plus almost complete helplessness, led to still more extreme ones.

### **The Colonial Case: Ritualism**

In the colonial situation the father subjected to the most severe withdrawal of status respect must have been so occupied with his rage and bewilderment that he could not respond to persons around him; he merely ruled them and pushed them out of his way. His children saw him as a powerful figure who controlled them, who valued them little, and who had his own interests and concerns on which it was dangerous to intrude. The child in such a home felt that he was not loved. He had no real security. He lived in terror.

A child having such an experience may try to protect himself by what is called "identification with the aggressor"—that is, by a kind of pretending. For example, in an actual case, a girl extremely afraid of ghosts and therefore terrified by walking along a dark hall at night solved the problem by pretending each time she walked down the hall that she was the ghost. In the same way, some children put under extreme pressure by the self-centered and non-loving care of their parents solve this problem by imitating one of the parents in every detail, to persuade themselves that if they are identical with their parent, the parent must love them.

We can see how this might happen in the colonial situation we have just described, where there was such pressure in the

home. The young boy tried to persuade himself that he was exactly the same as his father. Then he learned that the colonial rulers, in fact all the foreign elite, had more power than his father and that they were to be hated as his father hated them. Perhaps he could protect himself against his father by associating himself with them instead of hating them. Or perhaps he could do both: both hate them and imitate them. His emotional life became confused.

Then, as he moved outside the home and came into more and more actual contact with the power of the colonial elite, he found that in some ways they resembled his father. They had superior power. And they would no more receive him, regardless of what he did, than would his father. So he tried to identify with these new aggressors. By doing this he not only averted this new terror but also lessened his old one. He gained protection from his parents, for he had now become identical with something even more powerful than they.

Thus, in a Dutch colony, in his sports and clothes and speech he copied the Dutch; in a British colony, he tried to act as the British did. If he had the opportunity, he might study in the Western-type schools which the colonial masters established. He might pursue the occupations they approved, becoming, for example, a clerk in their offices. He might become a Christian, a particularly submissive Christian. But even as he tried to be like one of the aggressors, he was consumed with rage at them which he dared not admit to himself. His energies were forever absorbed in a continuing inner struggle to contain his rage and deal with the conflict within him. So he imitated the social modes of the colonial masters, but with half a heart, no will, bewilderment in his brain and no initiative or judgment. He would never advance in their world, but he would continue to go through the motions. He is appropriately described as a ritualist.

Many such persons are found in colonial or ex-colonial areas today. They are clerks in the offices of Western businessmen in colonial areas. They are eager to succeed, so they think, but something is wrong with their performance. Western businessmen in colonial areas are likely to say, "They are all right as clerks, but they have no head for business."



Persons who have tried to identify with the aggressors have sometimes become the first leaders of a colonial country after independence. Not only the top national leaders but some of their ministers and many of their civil servants at all levels are ritualist in greater or less degree. They entered the civil service in imitation of their European masters. They are excellently trained in European institutions, but many of them are hindered by their inner conflicts. These individuals will faithfully perform routine office or ministerial functions, but their lives are essentially imitative and they lack the initiative to meet their countries' complex problems effectively.

### **Messianism or Deliverance**

Even more extreme than ritualism is a group reaction to the psychological pressures of colonialism that I shall define as Messianism. This has appeared in most traditional societies on which an alien power has imposed its rule and its foreign ways of life. Messianism appears as a social movement based on the belief that the power of the conquerors can be made to disappear and the good life restored by magic. Unable to bear the pressures caused by colonialism, men who previously had been rational citizens, peacefully (though resentfully) obeying the colonial commands, find the frustrations of reality unendurable. Seeing no rational way to restore an identity for themselves and unable to live without one, they insist on believing that there is one and find it in magic practices which in moments of lesser pressure they know are of no use.

In Burma, in 1930 and 1931, men in the countryside suddenly believed that magic words and charms would make them safe against the weapons of the English. Armed only with primitive weapons, they marched against rifles. In Madagascar, protected from rifle-fire by a bit of wood on a string clenched between the teeth, men charged similarly against European guns. In the Southwest Pacific, where the islanders had seen ships and planes pour out supplies during World War Two, they believed after the war that if they could cast off the Europeans, ships and planes would appear which would return their native goods to them or would bring them the goods which the Europeans who had destroyed their civilization possessed in such quantities. In New

Guinea those who lived inland built airports in the jungle. Those in shore villages built wharves into the sea and cast their furniture and household equipment into the ocean, waiting thereafter for their magic to bring the ships and planes that should re-equip them.

The belief that one can be rescued from one's troubles by magic of course restrains intelligent imaginative action to attain economic growth. Messianism is mentioned here both for that reason and because it testifies to the intensity of the psychological pressures created by colonialism.

### THE PERPETUATION OF VALUES HOSTILE TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

This analysis of certain extreme reactions of some groups in colonial societies to severe social pressure may make it easier to understand the more general effects of such pressures among colonial and ex-colonial peoples.

An individual who is looked down on and treated as an inferior is likely not only to hate the persons who treat him so but also to reject the things those persons value, even if he imitates them in externals. A person with a normal childhood in a traditional society reacts in this way to the European colonial masters. Therefore, he cannot set a high value on using his energies in attacking the problems of industrial production or other modern business activity, because that is a European value, and along with it goes the fact that the Europeans look down on him as inferior. He cannot separate the two; if he accepts the first, he must accept the second, which would be fatal to his self-respect. So, since acceptance of European values is such a threat, he protects himself by clinging to traditional values. By holding to the idea that physical labor is humbling, that an elite individual is interested in cultural learning, that one's status determines one's worth, a member of the traditional elite can protect himself to some extent from the contempt of the European. He can tell himself (unconsciously) that the powerful European's view of the individual's worth is not really so important. And for the same sort of reason the member of a traditional lower class clings to his religious belief, his view of what type of social structure is good, his traditional methods.

This is the reaction of the normal traditional individual in a colonial society toward Western values. That of a ritualist person is similar. The ritualist individual is prepared to imitate Western behavior, just as earlier he imitated some threatening characteristic of his father, so that he can try to persuade himself that since he is like the Westerner, the Westerner does not really feel contempt for him. However, he does not really persuade himself, and so even while he serves as a clerk he distrusts the Westerner, and withdraws from him even while he imitates him.

Because of the threat posed by the attitudes of Western colonial masters to the identities of individuals in a traditional society that we have just described, it is often difficult for a member of a colonial or formerly colonial society to receive technical advice from a Westerner. Many individuals in less-developed countries must fear Americans and other Westerners and unconsciously distrust their advice even while apparently listening or watching closely. They ask themselves: Would a person who feels contempt for them advise them except in his own interest? And can any action in his interest also be in theirs? Perhaps they fear him especially as he bears gifts, because the colonial administrator often tried to bribe the colonial subject to serve his purposes. Obviously this sort of attitude is not an absolute bar, but it is no doubt one cause of the ineffectiveness of much technical aid.

Many native-born individuals, it is true, seek employment in Western business organizations, but their behavior is usually ritualist. They seek to identify themselves with Europeans; but when they try to function in their employment their hatred of European values and the conflict within them prevent them from functioning successfully. They have "no head for business." They make mistakes, misunderstand instructions, fail to anticipate needed actions.

Thus we can see from the emotional and psychological reactions we have described that, although colonial rule has laid a material base for economic growth in many countries, it may have created psychological barriers more important in their effects.

However, we must also note one important possible exception

to the conclusion that individuals in traditional societies are unable to share effectively the values of their colonial masters. In some traditional societies there were struggles for power before any European intrusion, and groups who had once held an accepted place in the society were later denied recognition of the status which they believed was rightfully theirs. When Europeans overthrew the dominant traditional group, the members of some such subordinated groups greeted the Europeans as deliverers. If they did, they may have accepted Western values fairly readily. In addition, if the groups from whom status recognition had been withdrawn have passed through the phase of retreatism and become creative, they may enter effectively upon technological progress.

### MEANINGS FOR THE FUTURE

If colonial rule has had the effects that have been sketched above, what may one conclude concerning the prospects for economic growth in colonial areas, either while they remain colonial or after they obtain their independence?

If the colonial rule results in retreatist personality after several generations, some individuals with creative personality may emerge in still later generations. It is to be expected that creative individuals who do emerge while the area is still colonial will not imitate the economic activity of the colonial masters because that would be acceptance of the master's values. They may continue economic innovation of a distinctly different type, but the situation in which they live is more likely to direct their energies into other activities, such as the attainment of independence.

Even after colonial rule ends, economic growth is not likely to become vigorous until change in personality has occurred. However, rather quickly, say in the period between infancy and maturity of one generation, creativity may emerge out of retreatism on a fairly large scale, and the creative individuals may see in economic skill their best opportunity to prove their worth.

If this analysis is correct, it suggests that at least 30 years must pass between the time when independence is assured and the time when economic growth becomes vigorous, unless the



history of the country was such before colonial rule that there already existed a tradition of business careers. The latter was true in India, but not in most parts of Indonesia.

## A CASE IN POINT: BURMA

### THE TRADITIONAL SOCIETY

#### Early History

BURMA's early history was governed much more by the inner workings of her own society than by external contacts. High mountain ranges wall off Burma from all her border neighbors, and her isolation was increased by the fact that when the Burmese conquered the country they established their capital well into the country, at a distance from the sea. Thus she had little contact with her neighbors and the rest of the world during the thousand years before the British came.

Much of Burmese history is that of struggles for power among the racial and cultural groups of which the populations of various regions of the country consist. These were the Burmese, who are the largest group, the Karens, the Arakanese, the Mons and the Shans. The Shans are related to the Chinese.

In early times the Mons drove the Karens from Lower Burma into the mountains of eastern Burma. In the 9th century A.D. or earlier the Burmese, driven south across the Himalaya Mountains by the Chinese, occupied Upper Burma. By the middle of the 11th century they had established dominion over virtually all of Burma. Later the Shans expanded west and southwest from the Yunnan plateau of southeast China onto the tablelands in east and northeast Burma. From the end of the 13th century to the middle of the 16th the Shans, Mons and Burmese disputed the control of Burma. Then the Burmese established supremacy again, retaining it until the end of Burmese independence, except for a Mon revolt which interrupted it briefly around 1750.

The periods of Burmese supremacy, as well as those of divided rule, were filled with savage tribal warfare. One reads of an entire court carried into captivity, cities demolished or plundered as punishment for resistance, and of mass executions; and one can imagine the cruel individual acts which accompanied these official deeds. The last vicious Burmese-Mon war in the 18th century largely depopulated Lower Burma, and much of it

returned to jungle. After the 1750's the country gradually became more peaceful, but memories by each group of the robbery and cruelties of the others surely remain even to the present day.

Nevertheless, when the British absorbed Burma in the 19th century they found there a prospering social and agricultural economic system. The Mons had absorbed Buddhism and other elements of Hindu culture from early Indian traders, and the Burmese had taken those into their own culture in modified form and had spread them throughout Burma.

### **The Traditional Society: Personality**

The personalities of the members of the dominant group in that society were highly authoritarian. The childhood of girls prepared them to bear more responsibility and act with more independence than men, yet to acknowledge men's superiority. The Burmese men had the authoritarian personality that we have already seen is a characteristic of the traditional society. Not confident of their own manliness, their fears caused anxiety about their relationships with others that led them to lay extreme emphasis on social rank and to bow before the will of superiors. Their fears also caused rage, expressed in aggressiveness if possible and always in domination over anyone in an inferior position. As protection against the danger that these impulses might get out of control, the Burmese elung to Buddhism with its doctrine of humility; they forbade themselves to ask gifts or material aid from others or to assume any responsibilities for the affairs of others. They assumed an outward appearance of being calm and undisturbed, which caused Westerners to refer mistakenly to the Burmese as happily carefree people.

### **Social Structure and Culture: Differences from Other Traditional Societies**

Although the society was basically similar to traditional societies everywhere, there were important differences in Burma that need to be considered here.

In all southeast Asia women had great personal freedom, but they had even greater freedom in Burma than in other places. This was true even though the Burmese adopted Buddhism, which implies that women are inferior to men. Thus the wishes

of a Burmese girl are subordinate to those of her brother, as is common in authoritarian societies, and a Burmese woman follows her husband down the street. Yet when a Burmese girl marries there is no change of name or mode of address to indicate subordination to a husband, or even that she is no longer single or who her husband is.

Furthermore, women in Burma are often the decision-makers. Burmese women historically have played important and often dominant roles in family decisions. During British days they were said to be the proprietors of virtually all retail stores operated by Burmese.

Even though the Burmese traditional society was not so old as other traditional societies, its methods of production were not primitive. Irrigation systems to carry water to the fields were in operation in some areas of the dry zone, making possible production of two or even three crops per year. While the only industry was handicraft industry, there were specialists who may appropriately be termed engineers, and many temples show great engineering skill. There were also schools for medical training, and there is testimony in British records that for some time after the British came to Burma native doctors were more successful than European ones in the treatment of local diseases.

Land was plentiful in Burma and therefore had not the special value it had in countries where land was scarce. So there was no land rental and no upper class of large landholders. Instead the family who cultivated the land inherited the right to occupy and use it. The only person other than the cultivator and the members of his family who shared in the produce was the king. Before World War Two the most common size of landholding was some 15 acres, and this may well have been the approximate size centuries earlier. In comparison to landholdings in the larger Asian countries, these holdings were remarkably large, and the Burmese level of living was higher than that of India or China.

In Burma family ties did not reach so far as in most traditional societies. They were so weak that they did not prevent migration of part of a family group; and if the population of a village grew too great for the amount of land available nearby, a group of village members might migrate and start a new village.



## Equality and Rank

The fact that landholding was not important and that there was no class of large landholders may explain another difference—why traditional Burma has been called a community of equals. Families did not try to accumulate signs of wealth. They gave away extra money to gain merit. One gave it not to the poor, because it was sinful for them to receive it, but to the monks in a monastery. Construction of a monastery yielded especial merit.

In their political system the Burmese rejected the idea that an individual should inherit an official position of authority without any test of his ability.

The largest related unit of government was the *myo* or "circle" consisting of usually 10 to 50 villages. Each circle was led by a headman. As in other traditional societies, his powers were limited by custom and his ability to lead; but when he had observed the opinions of the elders and reached a decision, his decision was final. There was no protection against abuse of power by a headman except an extreme one; on occasion a tyrannical headman was murdered. The position of headman was inherited in his family, usually by the oldest son, but not if the villagers decided that another member of the family was more able. Then it would go to a younger son or to a nephew.

In theory the headman was responsible to a lieutenant of the king. In theory also the powers of the king were absolute. He had the right not only to punish offenses against him in any way he chose but also to take the lives of citizens innocent of any offense for ritual purposes that custom permitted. He controlled all foreign trade and conducted it in his own name. But in practice his powers were limited by the support that he could win from the people. Because he had no land from which to raise an army, his armed forces were only what he could summon if the people responded to his leadership. And he had a council of advisers whose position was so firmly rooted in custom that they often vigorously questioned the king's proposed policies. The kingship was inherited, but it went not to the oldest son but to any member of his family who was able to seize and hold the throne.

The positions of status, except for those as headman and king, were open to anyone through ability and luck. At about the age

of eight every boy served with the monks in a monastery for at least one week and usually for three months, and thereafter he was required to attend monastery school for from six to eight years. Any boy might choose a religious career by remaining in the monastery. Or, he would be allowed to return at any time and learn as much as he could. The king might select advisers from any class, and a peasant girl to whom the king was attracted might become one of his queens and mother of a king. And as noted above, even succession to positions as headman and king depended in part on ability and cunning. Thus a man's rank did not depend on his membership in a group of superior or inferior status but on relationships with other individuals who had a rank similar to his.

However, the emphasis on rank in those personal relationships was great, being typical of the respect for rank in any authoritarian society. Within the family, differences in status rested on sex, age and position as parent, and within the village on age and being a headman. Throughout the society differences in status depended on monkhood, religious learning and preferment by the king. An instance of the strictness of age-ranking within the family in present-day Burma occurred at a gathering at which the writer was present. A highschool-educated Burmese man from an outlying town addressed his cousin two years younger, who had a foreign university education and held a professional position, by the term of address one applies to inferiors. Elders of a village were regarded with deference. The importance of age and rank was constantly stressed in every aspect of Burmese life. Even today an individual dealing with a person of higher rank is often so inhibited against independent thought that he is unable to come to a conclusion in his own mind until the superior has rendered a judgment.

### **Resistance to Technical Change**

Lastly, in this listing of traits of personality and culture that were of especial importance in Burma, it should be noted that they included traits that in other traditional societies caused resistance to change and new methods. However, such barriers to technological change were weaker in Burma than in other countries.

We have seen that traditional religious belief in the dominating power of the natural world and the fear of offending the

spirit powers caused resistance to change and made people fearful of new ways of life. Because this old belief exists in refined form in Buddhism, it has sometimes been suggested that Buddhist doctrine or the culture traits associated with it constitute a strong barrier to economic progress. I believe that this is not correct. Buddhism did not prevent Burmans from fighting savage wars for the conquest of their neighbors or from building systems of irrigation canals to provide water to fields in the dry zone. They did not hinder Mindon, the next to last Burmese king, from introducing new industries or from sending Burmans abroad to study European techniques. They did not deter U Nu, a devoted Buddhist, from leading a program for economic development when he was Prime Minister of Burma.

In other respects the forces leading toward stability of the traditional society and thus constituting barriers to technological change were weaker than in other places. Notably, authoritarianism had not resulted in inherited class differences, and there was no distinction between a landed class and a working class.

This does not mean that land ownership was not of great importance. It was the basis of membership in a village, and existence in a village without owning land seemed strange to the Burmese. Thus there was a resistance to leaving the land to try a new career in industry or trade. However, in most traditional societies the land-owner as a member of the elite faced another barrier to changing his position. He looked down with scorn on any work with the hands, seeing it as fit only for an inferior class. This was not true of the Burmese. Because the Burmese land-owners were themselves the cultivators, who presumably had pride in their own craftsmanship and regarded a skilled handicraftsman with respect.

In summary, then, it would appear that resistance to technological change was not so great in traditional Burma as in older traditional societies. It should have required less stimulus to set economic growth in motion in Burma than in other countries.

## MODERN POLITICAL HISTORY

Before we consider the problems of social and economic change, it will be useful to outline the recent political history of Burma.

## The Colonial Period

In 1824-25, partly to end repeated border troubles, the British moved from India to occupy the Arakan, the strip of Burma adjoining India, and the Tenasserim, the long tail extending down the Malay Peninsula. Unable to deal with the Burmese kings, the British occupied Lower Burma in 1852 and Upper Burma in 1885. The kingdom thus came to an end. The British ruled Burma as a part of India until 1937, when Burma became a separate colony.

Under colonial rule the Burmese lapsed into the apparent indifference which observers have noted in colonial lands everywhere. From the end of the 19th century Burmese groups agitated for some measure of national self-government and then for independence, and in response to this agitation an advisory council was created in 1923 and a legislature with limited powers in 1937. Yet only a small minority of the Burmese who could vote participated in the elections of these bodies, and the British administrators were usually able to control the elections, and to "buy" enough members of the council and legislature, by offering them well-paid position, to control those bodies. Because of this control it may seem that Burmese political indifference was justified; but if a majority of the voters had acted vigorously, they could have elected representatives whom the British could not have controlled.

As has proved true in so many other places, the indifference was only on the surface. When an opportunity appeared, there was intense opposition to British rule. By secret agreement with the Japanese, a "Burmese Independence Army" of 30,000 helped the incoming Japanese in 1942 in return for a promise of immediate independence. But the Japanese delayed independence until the end of the war, and their rule was harsh; and two resistance groups, one Communist-led, helped the British and American armies that attacked the Japanese from India. The British considered the Burmese assistance to the Japanese as treachery and in 1945 withdrew many of the powers of self-government that had been granted in 1937.

## Independence

The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League or AFPFL—a party



formed by merger of the two resistance groups—threatened guerrilla war, or surprise attacks by small groups of volunteer soldiers. However, Britain consented to Burmese independence if it was desired, and in 1947, the Burmese voted to leave the British Empire. Burma became independent on January 4, 1948.

The government of the nation thus formed is parliamentary. It is also federal in part. So-called "autonomous," or self-governing, states were formed for the Shans, Kachins, Kayahs and Karens, and the central government shares powers with these states. Over the remainder of the country the national government exercises all authority. The Karen State is unsatisfactory to the Karens, who form a large minority group in many areas not included within the state and claim that they form a majority in some. Even though the Arakanese are superior in numbers and influence in an easily distinguished geographic area, no state was granted them.

Since independence, the path to national unity and development has not been smooth. There have been rebellions led by Karens and other minority groups, Communist-led revolts and, when the army has suppressed these, guerrilla activity and disorder in the countryside. At present, for the second time, civilian rule has been replaced by a military government.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

### **Technical Advance during Mindon's Reign**

We have noted that Burma had little contact with the outside world or knowledge of European technical superiority until the coming of the British in the 19th century. However, in 1852 King Mindon, shocked by military defeat, decided to modernize his country, and there was a short period of remarkable economic change.

Mindon sent a small number of court officials and other young men to Europe for training. They learned English thoroughly, and a few of them also learned to speak French well. He introduced coinage, or metal currency. He built a fleet of river steamers and erected telegraph lines for communication between the

capital at Mandalay and Lower Burma. He increased the cultivation of rice in Upper Burma, erected factories with European machinery and in some cases under European management for the manufacture of cotton and silk cloth and other products. He also successfully promoted increased export and import trade. In addition, he introduced fixed salaries for his officials and established a new and fair tax that was so successful that the British continued it after they had taken Upper Burma.

If he had lived longer, this remarkable ruler might have accomplished greater changes in Burma, but his death brought an end to his new operation of Burmese enterprises. His son let them decay or be abandoned or be controlled by the British.

Mindon's success is interesting because of what it reveals about Burmese culture and personality. It is clear that the members of the king's court were not trained in traditional circumstances, because there were among them a number of men who welcomed change and took risks. That is, there were men who had the personality traits of innovators and business executives; and the new enterprises started by the king aroused their energies and initiative. The influence of these creative personalities came to an end or was suppressed under colonial rule.

### **The Colonial Period: Development and Use of Burma's Resources**

Under British rule, development of Burma's natural resources proceeded rapidly and the British built the transport, communications, and urban facilities which economists refer to as a necessary base for economic growth.

The first resources to be exploited were the rich soil of the Delta and the teak forests. Burma's teak trees were the best in the world, and British firms cut and milled them and exported them throughout the world.

The British were eager for the rice that the Delta might produce. Both to encourage settlement of the Delta and for other reasons they introduced the Western system of land ownership. Some 400,000 tons of rice were exported annually by the early 1870's, almost two million tons at the end of the century, and three million just before World War Two.

The rice trade and the increase of internal commerce created

need for improved transport. The British bound the country together with railroad and river transport systems and later a road system. The postal system was improved and telegraph and telephone lines were constructed between the main cities.

In the 1890's Burma became one of the world's oil exporters. During World War One large-scale mining of tin and the valuable chemical named tungsten began in southeastern Burma. In the 1920's large-scale mining of lead, zinc, silver and other metals was started in Upper Burma. However, rice remained the most important export.

Thus, the Burmese economy was mostly based on the teak-forests, agriculture and mining, all developed for the export trade. Almost no modern manufacturing appeared. Also, the export trade was almost entirely controlled by the British although there were other European, Chinese and Indian firms in foreign trade.

### **The Role of Burmans during the Colonial Period**

Except in agriculture and perhaps the teak industry Burmans did not take an important part in the new developments, even up to the beginning of World War Two.

It is easy to understand why this was true at the beginning of British rule. When the British conquered Burma, the Burmans were first enemies and then subjects whose loyalty there was no reason to expect. They spoke an unknown language and had no training in Western techniques or professions. They knew nothing of British government practices. On the other hand, Indians spoke and wrote the English language or could be spoken to in their own language by Englishmen with experience in India. They had Western-type training and were experienced in British administration. Therefore British governmental officials brought them from India to fill the administrative, professional and technical posts below the top levels which were filled by the British.

Until perhaps the 1920's, the telephone, telegraph and postal departments were administered from India. Postal clerks and postmen were Indians. Telegraphy was in English. A Burman might send a telegram if he had his message translated into English, but until some time in the 1930's, unless he could speak Hindustani or English, it was not possible for him even to use

the telephone system, much less be employed in it.

Just as it was convenient for government administrators to employ Indians, it was convenient for British businessmen and for the European, Chinese and Indian firms that entered Burma to import Indian assistants, technicians, supervisors, skilled workers, bookkeepers and clerks.

Indian craftsmen and unskilled workers were employed for a different reason. Indian laborers would work under conditions which Burmans rejected, and for wages on which Burmans could not live. At first, private companies paid the cost of bringing Indians to Burma. Later, when steamships made passage much cheaper and they could pay for it themselves, one of the world's great migrations began. In 1918, 300,000 Indian laborers entered Burma.

Only a very few Burmans advanced to good positions in government offices or business even after it became possible for them to get the necessary education. At the time of independence there were no Burmans managing important industries such as rice exporting or mining. British businessman said that the Burmans did not have the ability to hold important positions, but Burmese history shows that that was not true. There must have been some other reason, and I shall discuss it later.

The colonial period certainly brought the benefit of a rising level of living to the Burmans, and under British rule there was established a base for continuing economic development. But Burmans were not drawn into new occupations, positions as managers and leaders, or other active parts in the process of technical change.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDEPENDENT BURMA

Burma suffered so much destruction during World War Two that production was reduced to a low level. As reconstruction proceeded, especially after 1950, and because economic growth was the goal of the Burmese leaders, a rapid increase in production might have been expected. But it did not occur. The failure was caused in large part by the actions and attitudes of the people and the bad management of the national leaders.



## The Failures of Leadership and Management

When we investigate the deeds of the men who expressed a great desire for development, we find that many important government actions that were supposed to help development were harmful to the country and hindered development. A number of national leaders were dishonest, and many others not suitable to hold office.

We would find the same kind of failures in other countries. I discuss it here because what happened in Burma is an example of the performance of societies where the traditional social system has been disrupted and where persons subjected to the pressures of colonial rule may be not capable of effective judgment and action.

Some illustrations follow:

When the outlet pipes of two irrigation dams being constructed by the Irrigation Department collapsed in the mid-1950's because of faulty construction and had to be rebuilt, the Department did not hire other engineers or get new advice. It simply ceased to build other large projects.

A village development and agricultural program was established, and by 1958 some 400 or 500 village workers were being trained every year and some 1,700 were spread throughout the country. But no transportation, not even bicycles, had been provided for most of them.

A very promising program of granting money by the central government to local communities was begun in 1952 to encourage local initiative in rebuilding and improvement in the communities. Local committees were formed to manage the funds. The committees aroused resentment in the people by using the money for their own purposes. The prime minister did not try to reform the worthwhile program. He simply abolished it.

The most extraordinary bad management occurred in the planning and building of new manufacturing projects.

The prime minister employed three men who knew nothing about the business to be responsible for building a factory to produce drugs. They proceeded with no analysis by medical or public health experts, no estimates of production costs or markets, and no plans for distribution of the products. They sought no advice from engineers on the cost of building, which

was done by a foreign company. The public agency that operated the factory suffered large losses.

A steel mill was built although Burma lacked the necessary coal and limestone and did not have enough steel scrap left after the war for its continued operations.

A brick and tile factory was begun in 1954. When it was nearly completed, it was discovered that the factory, kilns for baking bricks, houses for managers, and other buildings were being constructed on top of the nearest supply of clay. It was necessary to build a road two miles long across wet land to reach another supply. Because of mistakes in planning, it required four years to complete the construction.

A principal cause of mismanagement in government enterprises was that officials at all the lower levels were unable or unwilling to make decisions and referred all problems requiring any positive action to their superiors, who in turn referred them to still higher officials.

Thus the highest authority, the Economic and Social Board, which was responsible for the whole economic development program, was burdened with a multitude of matters requiring decisions that should have been made by managers and lower officials. The Board had little time for discussion of questions of general policy. Apart from its discussions of unimportant current matters, it spent its time deciding whether to approve new projects or new contracts. If there were no questions, the prime minister would make a decision, but if even one serious question was raised there was a tendency to avoid decision. When discussion had continued for a time without decision, the chairman often turned to the next item. The previous one was left undecided, and the existing state of affairs continued. The Board paid almost no attention to the execution of its decisions, the management of government departments or the public enterprises, or the completion of projects.

### **Successes—The Exception**

However, there were a few exceptions to the record of mismanagement. Both in governmental enterprise and in actions to help private enterprise some things were done rather well. Banking and financial policies were effective. The extraction and

refining of petroleum and the mining of lead, zinc and silver in the northern mining district proceeded well, managed by the private British company that had conducted the operation before the war. In other places, things went well here and there where an effective individual was given command. The program to install small electric power generators in the towns made modest progress, as did the one to restore teak production. In 1956 capable and vigorous men were chosen to manage the Land and Resources Development Corporation.

A hospital was erected here and there, although in some places without providing enough doctors and nurses. Several public housing projects were constructed. The number of state schools and the number of pupils in them were increased rapidly, and there was a great advance in education.

In the field of public health the Burmese government invited the assistance of the United Nations and the United States Public Health Service. With the cooperation of Burmese officials, their campaigns against malaria, lung ailments and other diseases were well managed and highly successful.

The effective actions, of which these are examples, are exceptions to the lack of action and mismanagement in the government's economic development program as a whole. Even so, their presence is somewhat surprising in view of the prevailing public behavior. An explanation of the behavior of the majority of national leaders will not be satisfactory unless it is also consistent with this contrary behavior of a small minority.

### **The Paradox**

The question that is most puzzling is not the co-existence of these two contrasting kinds of behavior. It is the existence of an apparent dedication to economic development by intelligent leaders, side-by-side with their irresponsibility in accomplishing the measures affecting development. Also there is the fact that the people did not protest but calmly accepted the official behavior. We must account both for the bad management and for the lack of concern about it.

If we can understand this behavior of national leaders and the people's attitude toward it, we may understand the complex forces at work in the Burmese society. They are not to be ex-

plained by assuming that the Burmese as a people lack industry or technical ability or leadership ability. They have shown the first quality in their agriculture, the second in their traditional architecture and engineering, and the third in many achievements in their military and religious history. Although some government officials in high position lack ability, the more influential ministers of the civilian government were men of superior intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of Burma's leaders in high positions have been honest men who hated corruption, and the most important question is why such men should have so badly managed the economic development program and permitted every kind of ineffective and dishonest behavior in officials in lower positions.

Much of the behavior I have described might be explained by stating that the personalities of the individuals are traditional. Devoting energies to the technical and economic problems of planning and managing a factory or steel mill would be impossible for individuals with traditional personalities. However, to state that personalities are traditional is not a convincing explanation, because if their personalities were simply traditional, the individuals would not have concerned themselves with industrial projects in any way. However, the men we are discussing are intelligent individuals who intensely desire to achieve a modern economy as rapidly as possible.

It is probably fair to state that officials throughout the ranks as well as at the top were not aware that things were being done badly. Honest and dishonest officials alike seemed unaware that inaction, irresponsible action, and corruption had any effect on growth or the public welfare. The economic problems that confronted them did not seem to be the central realities of their lives. They acted, so it seemed to observers, as though those problems had only a shadowy significance to them. They seemed preoccupied with inner concerns that caused them to live in a dream world in which economic realities did not intrude. Indeed they gave the impression of avoiding critical analysis for fear it would disrupt that dream world. This seemed to be the central problem.

To understand this behavior, it seems to me that we must go

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<sup>1</sup> The author is not in a position to evaluate the ability of the present military administrators.



back to examine relationships between conquerors and conquered during the colonial period, relationships which also explain the failure of Burmese to enter into new occupations during that period.

### THE SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF COLONIAL RULE

British administrators in Burma imposed upon the society the principles and practices of contract, rule by impersonal law, and separation of church and state. What was good in England they thought would be good in Burma. To keep the subject people under control, they imposed direct rule; the British directly supervised the internal administration of their colonies rather than leave it to a local chief.

In the process of imposing direct rule they abolished the right of villages to choose a circle headman. It will be remembered that a "circle" consisted of 10 to 50 villages. British officials appointed circle headmen and made them responsible for enforcing central government laws and orders. The British found circles of various sizes; to increase efficiency they changed circle boundaries. Later, village headmen were made directly responsible for enforcing the orders of the colonial administration, and the position of circle headman was gradually abolished. Village land areas and boundaries were changed. Then gradually the authority of central government officials, many of them Indian, was extended directly to the villages.

These successive changes destroyed the political and social basis of Burmese community life. Villages ceased to function as social organisms, or structures. Common lands, necessary for wood supply, grazing and village gatherings, disappeared, in some places because the community they served was no longer the governmental unit and in others because the headman no longer had the authority necessary to protect them from the private intrusion that the new laws of land ownership made possible. Village wells fell into disrepair and the water became unclean, and village streets lacked repair. Community indifference occurred.

An equally severe alteration of legal institutions became

effective as the British imposed the kind of uniform legal code necessary for modern industry and trade. The headmen who had settled disputes and dealt with offenses in the traditional way were replaced by judges who obeyed a code of law.

An important example of legal change that seemed evil to the Burmans was in the laws governing the ownership of land. The British, not understanding the traditional family use and occupation of land, made it possible for a single individual to own and buy and sell land. When they occupied Upper Burma they ruled that the person who was then cultivating each plot of land was the sole owner of the plot. If land was not being cultivated, it was open to settlement. In some cases individuals without moral principles seized village common land and land not being cultivated. Some land in the inherited possession of a family was not cultivated for several years. An individual who claimed such a piece of land and was therefore declared the owner could deprive the family (even his relatives, if he was sufficiently unfeeling) of the fruits of land that had always been the basis of family life. The regulations were disregarded for a long time in many areas in Upper Burma, but villages and families that disregarded them were in danger of being robbed by unprincipled individuals. Thus, British rule destroyed the basis of family and community life, and it encouraged the corruption of family and village relationships.

The courts approved of the new land regulations and ordered them to be enforced. As a result, the Burmans regarded the laws as evil and the courts as unjust. It is no wonder that crime and corruption increased in the colonial period, because the Burmans felt that morality and justice no longer guided life.

The British also had no respect for traditional Burmese religious values. In the Burmese royal court there had been a patriarch, or honored elder, who was the supreme religious leader. There was also a group of religious officials to enforce high standards of morality among the monks and regulate life in the monasteries. We have seen that the monasteries were of vital importance in Burmese life, because every boy lived for a time in a monastery and was taught discipline and religious beliefs by the monks. Under British rule there was no royal court, and in accordance with the principle of separation of

church and state there was no patriarch or high religious official to exercise authority over the monks. Their standards of morality and learning declined, so that among them there developed ignorant and dishonorable men and some criminals. In most of the new communities built under colonial rule there were no monks, no monastery, no religious school. In their personal behavior the British often showed contempt for monks and violated Burmese religious beliefs by refusing to remove their shoes when walking on places the Burmans considered holy.

The British disregard for almost everything that was Burmese was shown perhaps most clearly by individual relationships to Burmans. Most Britishers addressed all Burmans by titles that one uses in talking to an inferior and insisted on being addressed by Burmans as "Thakin," which means master. Very few Britishers had social relations even with the most cultural Burmans. Personal relationships indicated that in the view of the colonial masters the Burmese were an inferior race and their beliefs, values and personal characteristics lacking in worth. The colonial rulers said in effect, "We will rip apart your family and community relationships, scorn your religious beliefs, and deny you individual dignity. When your persons and the things you value interfere with our convenience, they are worthy of little consideration."

## AN INTERPRETATION

### **Results of the Colonial Pressures**

The effect of these colonial relationships on traditional Burmese personality, it seems to me, explains various aspects of Burmese behavior that are otherwise impossible to understand.

I have noted that the Burmese were indifferent under colonial rule, but that the indifference was only on the surface. Burmese acts during World War Two demonstrated the hatred of colonial rule that lay under it. Their behavior was retreatist. The rage must have been associated with British scorn for many things that were valuable to them, a need to cling to traditional identities in order to avoid accepting the British evaluation, and hatred of everything associated with the conquerors. I suggest that these attitudes and needs created in Burmans a deep dislike



for European-type occupations, and that dislike is an important cause of the failure of Burmans to enter into the new occupations in large numbers during the colonial period.

It also explains, I believe, why the Burmans calmly accepted the actions of their own leaders after independence. The Burmese still feel a strong dislike for the way of life of the colonial administrators and businessmen, which included scorn for their culture and behavior. Therefore they do not feel indignation when their leaders behave ineffectively in modern business roles. It does not matter how leaders behave in these alien roles. It is far more important to the people that their leaders reflect respect for traditional values and personal relationships.

The effect of colonial relationships, I think, also explains the behavior of Burmese national leaders during the 1950's. I believe that their behavior reflects ritualism or "identification with the aggressor" as I described it in the preceding chapter. To persuade themselves that the powerful and threatening European thought well of them, they had to persuade themselves that they too were "modern." So they needed *symbols* of modernity—factories, a steel mill—quickly, and it did not matter that the factories were inefficient. They refused to consider analyses which might show that their natural resources are not suited to some types of factories, because they needed the factories to satisfy their emotional needs.

At the same time, they continued to cling to their traditional ways of life and traditional personal relationships, which are commendable and worthy in traditional circumstances but which are not conducive to solving technical problems. The result was inner conflict that caused unreasonable behavior.

## CONCLUDING NOTE

Without realizing it, many individuals from technically advanced countries think of the developing countries somewhat as sponges, which may be expected to soak up the technology and even the institutions of the technically advanced countries without change, as a vegetable sponge soaks up liquid with which it comes in contact. In fact, the developing countries react in many positive ways, and their reaction is often a powerful tide



which carries the country irresistibly in a certain direction.

This book, as the reader will have realized, emphasizes these effects which the attitudes of the peoples of developing countries, and the institutions that have resulted from those attitudes, have on the process of development. Information from the outside and leadership from the inside are necessary for rapid social or economic change. But that change also depends in part on the history of the developing country and the resulting attitudes of its people. Many aspects of those attitudes are beyond the control of either foreigners who enter those countries or the national leaders themselves. Those foreigners and those leaders will do well to try to understand the social forces, and to adapt their actions to them.

These facts should make any individual humble as he attempts to influence the development of his country or to aid the development of another country. If this book has increased even slightly the informed humility of some of its readers, it has accomplished its purpose.

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